

THE JOURNAL OF THE ASSAM RESEARCH SOCIETY.

(Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti.)

A quarterly journal devoted to antiquity, history, ethnology, numismatics,
iconology and allied subjects relating to the present province of Assam
and the old kingdom which used to be known as Kāmarupa.

EDITED BY

RAI K. L. BARUA BAHADUR, B.L.

PRESIDENT, KĀMARUPA ANUSANDHAN SAMITI,

HONORARY SECRETARY, PROVINCIAL COIN CABINET, ASSAM, ETC.

Vol I

APRIL 1933.

No 1

Published by the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti, Gauhati

Annual subscription Rs. 4.

**

Single copy Rupee one.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
INTRODUCTORY <i>By the Editor</i> ...	1
ASSAM AS A FIELD FOR RESEARCH ... <i>By J. P. Mills, M.A., I.C.S.</i> ...	3
THE JAINTIAPUR COPPER - P L A T E <i>By Dr. K. M. Gupta, M.A., P.H.D.</i> 6 INSCRIPTION OF MĀHADEVĪ KĀSĀSATĪ.	6
THE SIGN & IN ANCIENT COPPER - <i>By Pandit Paulmanath Bhattacharya</i> 9 PLATE INSCRIPTIONS OF KĀMARUPA. , <i>Vidyavinod.</i>	9
PRĀG JYOTISHA, KĀMARUPA A N D <i>By Prof P. C. Sen, M.A.</i> ... 12 DAVAKA.	12
EARLY HISTORY OF TEA <i>By Dines Chandra Datta, M.A.</i> ... 15	15
GROWTH OF ASSAMESE LITERATURE <i>By Bolī Narayan Deka, M.A., B.L.</i> 26 IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.	26
REVIEWS	30

PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

Contributions meant for publication in the Journal should be typewritten legibly written on one page of the paper only and sent to the Editor in S. All remittances and correspondence on account of subscriptions or advertisements should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, Kāmarupa Anusandhan Sa Gauhati.

The Journal of the Assam Research Society.

VOL. I

April 1933.

No. 1

INTRODUCTORY.

The antiquarian research society known as the Kamrupa Anusandhan Samiti (Assam Research Society) has been in existence for the last twentyone years. The idea of founding the society was first conceived by Pandit Padmanath Bhattacharya Vidyavinod. It materialized during the conference of the Uttar Vanga Sahitya Parishad held at Kamakshya in the year 1912. It was a Muhamadan gentleman, Khan Chaudhuri Amanat Ulla Ahmad of Cooch Behar, who proposed the establishment of the society. This proposal was supported by Rai Bahadur Mrityunjai Chaudhuri of Rangpur and was adopted unanimously. Babu Sushadhar Rai, M.A., B.L., Vakil, High Court, Calcutta, who presided, made the first donation of Rs. 25 for the foundation of the society. The people of Assam will ever remain grateful to these large hearted Bengali gentlemen for the part they took in initiating the research movement in this province.

The Society was actually formed on the 7th April 1912 with only twelve members, the chief of them being the late Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Dhureswara Kaviratna and Pandit Padmanath Bhattacharya Vidyavinod. The late Chandranath Sinha, B.L. was appointed as the Secretary of the Samiti. Later on the Society secured as its patrons the Hon'ble Sir Archdale Earle, K.C.I.E., then Chief Commissioner of Assam, the Hon'ble Sir Edward Gant, then Lieutenant Governor of Bihar and Orissa, His Highness the late Maharaja Sir Jitendra-narayan Bhup Bahadur of Cooch Behar, Raja Prabhat Chandra Barua Bahadur of Gauripur and Lt Col. P. R. T. Gurdon, then Commissioner, Assam Valley Districts and Honorary Director of Ethnography in Assam.

The Society has been receiving financial assistance from Government since 1915-16. In the following year a strong executive committee with men like the late Rai Bahadur Bhubanram Das, the late Pandit Hemchandra Gossain, the late Satyanath Barah, B.L., the late Maulvi Azizur Rahman, Rai Bahadur Kalicharan Sen, B.L. and Srijiut Jogendranath Barua, M.A., B.L. was formed. Since 1917-18 the late Pandit Hemchandra Gossain continued to be the President and practically the life and soul of the Society till his death in the year 1928 when his mantle fell upon the editor of this journal. Mr S K Bhuyan, M.A., Professor, Cotton College, Gauhati, acted as Secretary of the Society for several years with great credit after which he resigned and was succeeded by the present Secretary Srijiut Dibakar Goswami, M.A. who is also a professor of the Cotton College. The Society has a building of its own at Gauhati where there is a fairly large collection of old *pathis*, entrusted to its custody by the Government, besides numerous objects of historical and antiquarian interest such as sculptured stone images, relics of ancient architecture, terra-cotta plaques, inscriptions on stone tablets and copper-plates, old guns and cannons, some of them being inscribed, swords, spears, battle-axes, bows and arrows, shields, ancient garments worn by kings, utensils and other domestic articles, a collection of old pottery, etc.

The anniversary meeting of the Society is held annually and in these meetings usually papers on historical, ethnological and allied subjects are read. The working of the Society has created a wider interest in these subjects throughout the province. Since the foundation

of the Society no less than five copper-plate inscriptions and one rock-inscription of the old Kāmarupa kings have been brought to light through the endeavours of some of the members of the Society. These newly discovered epigraphic records have considerably illuminated the history of ancient Kāmarupa. The want of a Journal of the Society has been long felt by all who take interest in antiquarian research in Assam. This journal is now published with a view to supply that want. Assam scholars engaged in research will now be able to publish the results of their labours in this journal and thus their contributions will, it is hoped, come to the notice of Orientalists throughout India and abroad.

"The province now known as Assam was a part of the ancient kingdom called Praja-yajña in the earliest times and Kāmarupa at a subsequent age. Kāmarupa therefore included Assam, but as the province is now known as Assam and the name Kāmarupa has been restricted to a single district in the province, this journal has been named "The Journal of Assam Research Society".

In a small province like Assam where men taking interest in research work of this nature are not yet in considerable numbers, a journal like this cannot prosper without the sympathy and support of the general public. We think that this journal can legitimately expect such sympathy and support and in the sincere belief that such support will not be wanting, the Samiti has started this enterprise although its financial condition is not prosperous. Every province in India has one or more journals of this type. Even that part of the Madras Presidency which is known as Andhra has a research society with a decent journal of its own. It does not certainly look well that Assam, one of the eight major provinces of India, should be without a journal, devoted to historical and antiquarian research, as organ of its Research Society.

The late Chandramath Sarma, B.L. in concluding his report on the working of the

Society between 1912 and 1920 wrote as follows :—

"The field of research in Assam is vast and it is hoped that young men of light and learning will join this association and enrich the history of their motherland. It will be a matter of extreme regret if they do not avail themselves of the opportunity which this Samiti affords."

We desire to point out that this journal will enable all research workers, whether young or old, to publish the results of their researches for the information of their co-workers in this province or elsewhere and thereby invite criticism and discussion which are essentially necessary for a correct finding on all doubtful points. The opportunity afforded by this journal will, we hope, be availed of by all concerned.

Before concluding we have to record with pleasure that, at the present time, the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti is not the only body taking active interest in the antiquities of Assam. In 1929 His Excellency Sir Laurie Hammond founded the Government Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies with Mr. A. H. W. B. ntineck, M.A., I.C.S., C.I.E. as Honorary Director and Mr. J. P. Mills, M.A., I.C.S. and Mr. S. K. Bhuyan, M.A., B.L. as Honorary Assistant Directors. This Department has very wisely so far confined itself to the publication of old manuscripts on historical subjects. As many as six *Burans* have been published, each with an excellent introduction by the editor Mr. Bhuyan. At least five of these published *Burans*, dealing with the history of the Ahom Kingdom in the seventeenth, eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, would be of great assistance to any one wishing to write a detailed history of Assam of this period. It is needless to state that if Government had not borne the expenses of publishing these manuscripts they would never have seen the light of day. Research proper and collection and preservation of records and relics are however the legitimate functions of the Society of which this Journal is the organ.

ASSAM AS A FIELD FOR RESEARCH.

By J. P. MILLS, M.A., I.C.S.

Having been honoured by the Editor with a request to contribute an article to the first number of the Journal of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti I pondered long the question of the most appropriate theme. It seemed to me that I could not do better than attempt to indicate, however briefly and sketchily, the special scope that Assam seems to offer to a Research Society. Our Province displays a vast and almost virgin field such as few learned societies in the world are fortunate enough to have before them. Its history goes back into the dim ages, and there were kings reigning in Assam when Rome was as yet only a small Latin state fighting for its existence against powerful rivals. True the Province has suffered much from the three great enemies of archaeology—war that destroys both men and their handiwork, luxurious vegetation that will crack and tear down the mightiest buildings, and a damp climate that obliterates nearly all things buried in the earth and many things on the surface. Yet a vast amount of material remains, and it is the task of a research society to find and interpret it. Some branches of this task require considerable funds, but others need little more than keenness and trained skill. In these days an article that ignored the financial aspect would be so much waste paper, and the money question has been in my mind throughout.

The object of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti, as I see it, is that of all similar societies, namely to push further and further back into the past the division between history and prehistory. The obvious material for this work and that which is nearest to hand is Assam's rich store of written records. It is only natural that the Samiti should have turned first to this, and it is probably its research in this field that is best known to the world. Notable work has been done, but much remains. All the old records are admittedly not of equal value, but only by preserving and translating all can every grain be winnowed from the

chaff. But it seems to me to be of supreme importance that the old records should not only be translated, but interpreted, and interpreted from a strictly objective standpoint—the standpoint of all true scientists. This is important in that most, if not all, of them were not written objectively, but from a Hindu standpoint, and the records of pre-Hindu Ahom days are coloured by later Hindu feeling. All these pictures of early days need to be removed from the later Hindu frames and studied and compared. By this means it ought to be possible to build up a composite picture of the early Ahom Court and country. Such a picture is badly needed, for it will be the only one of a high civilization built up on an animistic religion. In Assam Hinduism has now obliterated all traces of it, and the stock in Burma from which the Mons sprang have all become Buddhists.

Nor need the historical research of the Samiti be confined to written records. It is even more important for later history that verbal records should be studied without a moment's delay. There must be old men alive now, though death claims some of them every year, who in their youth have heard from the lips of old men first hand accounts of the days when Kings were reigning in Assam and Cachar. This priceless direct link with the past is weakening every year and every member of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti and every sympathiser with its aims should take care to miss no chance of recording carefully every detail of life and custom that the old men of today heard in their youth. Nothing must be omitted because it seems too trivial—it may supply a clue. All these accounts should be sent to and filed by the Samiti, where they will be available for students. Similarly the many families in Assam who are descended from men holding high office under the Ahom kings must have in their keeping a vast store of traditional history handed down from father to son. Let all this be collected

and from it we shall learn something of the functions of officers of which the ordinary man knows little more than the name.

It is time to turn for a moment to dumb records. The spade, the chief tool of the archaeologist, has hardly been used in research in Assam. What systematic digging there has been on ancient sites has, alas, been done with the object of looting ancient graves. It is rumoured that rich treasure has, in the past, been stolen from the tombs of the Ahom kings at Charaideo, an irreparable loss to Assam. It is time systematic excavations were undertaken. This does not mean the employment of costly armies of diggers; they would be impossible to supervise, the objects they exposed could not all be noted, and the money and labour would be wasted. A keen man with two labourers whose every spadeful he watched could accomplish much during a short stay on a site. Fortunately excavation in Assam is not as complicated as it is in the Middle East. There is no evidence here of the building of successive towns on the same sites throughout the ages. There is therefore no question of distinguishing and interpreting different culture strata. Nor is there any evidence that potsherds, far the most valuable archaeological evidence in many parts of the world, will tell us anything here. It is probable that pottery in Assam has always been plain and uniform, with no distinctive types belonging to different periods. This might be conveniently tested by sinking trial pits through a thick deposit of broken pottery that lies near the salt wells situated near Seripur in Hailakandi Subdivision. This deposit has probably taken an immense time to accumulate.

Both the traditions and physical characteristics of some of the hill tribes make it pretty certain that the earliest inhabitants of Assam were of Negrito stock. The spade is not likely to reveal anything of these wandering folk, but they have left behind them an immense number of stone celts, probably the blades of digging sticks. These are found on or just below the surface and differ in a most interesting way in different areas of the Province. Were the Samiti to let it be known that any found would be welcome a series would gradually be built up from which it would be possible to work out links with Burma and

elsewhere. Though Negritos seem to have survived till comparatively recent times it is unlikely that any of their physical remains will be found. There is a strong tradition however that the remnants of the race were blocked into a cave near Haflong by a Kachari king. The site has never been revealed, but if it could be found it would be worth investigating.

In dealing with more recent times the spade is an essential aid to research. There are tantalizing stories current of great walled towns buried deep in trackless jungle. Any clue of this kind should be followed up. Even the wonderful monuments of Dimaapur lay forgotten for centuries. But apart from unknown sites Assam is rich in ruins which have never been properly cleared. There are, for example, the Kachari sites of Maibong and Khāspur. With spade and axe they could be cleared to enable a survey to be made. Not only should we thus learn how the towns were laid out, but the casual finds already made show that statues, tiles, coins and possibly inscriptions would be found. This work is urgent. Not only is jungle destroying walls and buildings every year and erosion levelling out embankments, but the surviving oral tradition of the nature and use of the various enclosures will not last much longer. Many sites in Assam consist of earth works only, but they are none the less interesting on that account. For instance there is a chain of immense forts on the Jaintia edge of the high plateau N. E. of Haflong. Who built them we do not know. All sites of towns and forts have rubbish heaps. It is these that should be most eagerly sought, for it is in them that we can hope to find coins, beads and other small imperishable objects.

An archaeological characteristic of Assam of world wide fame is its wealth of megaliths. Indeed it is one of the few places in the world where no monuments of this type are still erected. Some of the old ones are of great age and interest. So covered with them is the high, sparsely populated plateau N. E. of Haflong that one dreams of a day when some of it may be turned into a National Park for the preservation for all time of the monuments and the wild animals that now roam near them at will. Among the monuments are groups of

huge sandstone cists of a type unknown elsewhere. It fell to my lot to discover them, and to Dr. Hutton and me to describe them. Though they were visible for miles sticking up out of the short grass they never seem to have been noticed before a striking example of how much lies ready to hand for anyone interested in the past. Both on megaliths and rocks in Assam are often found most interesting drawings. The recording of these has been almost entirely neglected. Yet they are of the utmost interest. Not only do we find here contemporary representations of weapons, etc., but from a series of records gathered from all over the province types could be distinguished and the evolution of pattern studied. For an example let me quote a cliff near Mibong. This has carved on it human figures, geometrical pattern, animals, birds, reptiles and double-headed "daos" of a particularly interesting type. All such carvings should be photographed, drawn carefully to scale, and if possible have paper "squeezes" taken of them. The cost would be negligible and all records could be filed by the Samiti.

There is another task for which the aid of the camera and pencil is essential. There must exist in private hands in Assam a very large number of antiques of artistic interest. brassware, silverware, ivory carvings, etc. There is good reason to believe, for instance, that only within the last 15 years some of the insignia of the Ahom kings were melted down by the person into whose possession they had come. Such a crime can claim no forgiveness, but the loss would not have been so irreparable had a record first been made of these precious relics. I would suggest that the Samiti beg all private owners to allow any antiques of artistic merit in their possession to be photographed and described. There would be no loss to anyone and no expense involved, but a pictorial record of Assamese art would be built up. From time to time it might even be possible to arrange loan exhibitions of the kind so popular in England.

It is time now to turn from the dead past to the living present, not only because the present throws light on the past, but for its own intrinsic interest. For some years now the Government of Assam has financed a series of Monographs on the hill tribes of Assam

known wherever ethnology is studied. Much remains to be done and will, I trust, be done, till a series of unique value has been built up. But quite apart from research among the wilder tribes there is work of the utmost importance to which I would like to draw the attention of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti. Throughout the plains of Assam Hindu ceremonies are performed which differ in greater or less degree from those of other provinces. Kamakshya, for example, is a site regarded as sacred throughout the length and breadth of India. Can we not have a full description of the temple, with the date of the building of each part, and a picture of the ceremonial both past and present? Or again there are the great Gossains of the Majuli. Their disciples number thousands, but nowhere have we a picture of their mode of life, the beliefs they hold, the buildings they inhabit, or the ceremonial connected with them. Offerings have poured in for countless years and one's mouth waters at the thought of the relics of past ages they must have brought. Could not some keen, skilled researchers portray and describe the precious things in their possession? It is not good enough to say "It will do later". Ceremonial changes, and antiques are destroyed or lost. Now is the time for study. Similarly with the village festivals throughout Assam. Years go by and they remain undescribed. For such research clear descriptions, photographs and drawings are required, to be placed in the safe keeping of the Samiti. It is fatal to wait till there is money available for publication. The first step is to collect and preserve the material. Money for publication will come all in good time.

Also of the present, though of the past perishing present, is folk-lore. Of this there is a priceless store in Assam. It is not often realised how far these tales have spread. Pliny, for example, clearly refers to Assam in one of his stories. Or again, part of a tale current to day in Assam was recorded in Egypt about 1,300 B.C. Yet again an identical story, save for necessary alterations in the animals taking part, is found among the Sama Nagas of Assam and the Lapps of N.W. Europe. These examples show the interesting questions of distribution that arise in the study of folk-lore. I am aware that some work has been done on

the folk tales of Assam, but efforts should be made to collect every tale and every variation of a tale. Delay will be fatal, for the modern schoolboys and University students have no ears for the lore handed down by former generations, and old tales will soon be forgotten. Once again, let them be recorded with full details of the sources from which they were obtained, and handed on to the Samiti to be filed. They will thus be saved from oblivion and the day will come when it will be possible to publish them.

Were not this article becoming over long I would say something on other points, such

as the importance of collecting full details of all indigenous systems of medicine, with the local and botanical names of all herbs used. There are old vegetable dyes too, far more lasting and beautiful than the modern aniline substitutes. These merit study. There is too much customary law which often fits local conditions far better than the law of the Courts. It is well worth recording. But the time has come to end by joining with all lovers of research in thanking the Editor for the generous part he is playing in the publication of the Journal of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti. Long may it flourish.

—o—

JAINTIAPUR COPPER-PLATE INSCRIPTIONS OF MAHADEVI KAŚASATI.

Dated Sakābdā 1710 (A. D. 1788), 1723 (A. D. 1801) and 1725 (A. D. 1803).

By DR. K. M. GUPTA, M.A., PH.D.

Preliminary.

1. This copper plate records three grants made from time to time, namely, in Sakābdā 1710, 1723 and 1725. A brief reference to this plate is made by Sir Edward Gait in his 'Progress of Historical Research in Assam', page 16, and by me in the Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, New Series, Vol. XIX, 1923, No. 8, page 320. I came across this plate about 1922. It was then in the possession of Kumar Chhatra Singh Nripa Bahadur of Jaintiapur. I now edit and publish the inscription for the first time.

The plate measures 5' x 3½' excluding a semi-circular projection of about 1' diameter coming out of the upper side. The projection has a hole in the top and a ring passing through it evidently for the purpose suspension. The royal seal is engraved just in the middle of the upper margin, and is exactly like the one described in my 'Dhupi Copper-Plate inscription of Rāmasimha (J. & P., A. S. B. New series, Vol. XVIII, 1922, No. 1, p. 73). The plate was in good state of preservation when I saw it about ten years ago.

On the first side of the plate (written earlier) there are in the middle of the plate sixteen lines, on the right margin one line, on the left margin two lines; on top margin, and on the right side of the seal five lines, and on top margin and on the left side of the seal four lines. On the second side (written later) there are seventeen lines excluding the invocatory line on top and two small lines, one below the invocatory line and the other written between lines 8 and 9. The last line is written apart from the main body of the inscription. The small line below the invocatory line with the figure 7 attached to it implies that the expression is to be inserted in line 7 in place of the 'anuniska' preceding the word 'Pritaye'.

The characters are modern Bengali with almost the same peculiarities as have been noticed in my Dhupi plate referred to above, and are on the whole well-formed. The language is Sanskrit, but a curious mixture with Bengali is noticeable here and there. Grammatical rules of Sanskrit have not been strictly followed.

The first inscription dated Sakābdā 1710 (A. D. 1788) records a grant of twenty halas of land by Mahādevī Kāsāsati, wife of king Badagosayi of Jaintiapur to the goddess Kālikā established in Śrī Lilāpurī Sannyās's abode (matha), apparently at Jaintiapur. Besides, four halas are made over as gift to the writer of the plate, and later on two halas more to the Brahmana and the oil-presser attending the goddess Kālikā. The grant is made with the consent of certain princesses and king Vijayanarayana. This shows that that grant had formed a part of the royal domain which has been pointed out in the Dhupi plate (J & P, A S B, New Series, 1922, Vol. XVIII, No 1, p 77).

Badagosayi's reign ended in 1770 A. D., he was succeeded by Chhatrasing (1770-1781), Jatanarayana (1781-1786) and Vijayanarayana (1786-1789). At the time of making the grant Vijayanarayana was thus the reigning king, and the queen-dowager (Kāsasati) had to obtain his permission. As Badagosayi is called in the inscription 'Jayantipura-Purandara' the title assumed by the reigning kings of

Jaintia) it seems that he was still alive and was regarded as king *de jure* although he had abdicated the throne to become a Sannyāsin (mendicant) in 1770 A. D. (J & P, A S B, XIX, 1923, No. 8, p 333). At the time of making the next two grants, namely of A. D. 1801 and 1803 Rāmasimha II (1790-1833 A.D.) was the reigning king, and Badagosayi is given the simple epithet of 'narapati', showing thereby that the latter was no more in the laud of the living. As there is no further mention of obtaining consent of any prince or princess to these later grants, it follows that they were made from out of her own personal possessions.

For other interesting details regarding Jaintia history and culture reference may be made to my Dhupi plate (J & P, A S B, XVIII, 1922, No 1, pp 73-79), Daulig plate (J & P, A S B, XIX, 1923, No 8, pp 323-329) and Jaintiapur plate (op. cit., pp 331-335), and to the Satak plate (J & P, A S B, XXV, 1929, No 1 pp. 10-169) edited by my pupil, K. G. Goswami.

TEXT (EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL)

(First Side)

1. শ্রী শ্রীজয়ন্তীপুর প্রবন্ধব বড় দশার্শ্র
2. নবপণ্ডে: শ্রীমহা দ্বা. লিখিত: শ্রীশ্রী-
3. লাপু সন্ন্যাসিনো ২ মঠস্থ শ্রীশ্রীকালি-
4. বা দেব্য: সেবাদ চলন নিমিত্ত শ্রীশ্রী-
5. বীকুমারী শ্রী শ্রীনাথুরী শ্রীজয়ন্তীকুমা
6. বীণামল্লমঃ শ্রী শ্রীবিজয়নাথবাণ বা-
7. জ্ঞো কুমত্যা চ শ্রীকালিকাদেবীণবম

১. শ্রীতথে গো বন্দপুব প্রমজন সাহিত ধা
২. বিংশতিতল পবিমিতা ভূম: ১২ ৩ প'ব-
১০. ভ্যাগেন ২য়া শ্রীকালিকাদেবৌ দস্তা। এত
- ১১ ৫ দান জন্তো য: অচরণকদ, স চণ্ডাল-
- ১২ স্তবতি ৪ এতদর্থৈ দিখিত ৩ ভ্রমপত্রমি-
১৩. ত শুশ্র চণ্ডাক্যকে ৫ শ্রীদে ৬ শুকগেবিশৌ
- ১৪ লিখিত প্রামাণ্যক চাপার্কৈ শু ৭ মবা প্রবং ৥

¹ Read গোসা ঞ্জ (Sans গোস্বামী)

² Read সন্ন্যাসিনো

³ Read স্বঃ

⁴ Read এতদানজন্তং যৎ (প্রদত্ত) (তদ)
পহরণ কতী চণ্ডাল ভবকি

⁵ Read শুশ্র

⁶ Read শ্রীদে

15. লিপি২র্থং ¹ হলু ² চতুৰ্থয় পৰিমিতা ভূমিঃ দাত
(on the right margin of the first side)
16. ব্যং ³ এতৎমধ্যে ⁴ ন আ বনখলায়াঃ হলদ্বয়ঃ
দলইকালি গ্রামে পূৰ্ব ⁵ চ
(below the 15th line, but apart from it)
17. তৎপশ্চাৎ গোবিন্দপুৰ গ্রামাৎ গোচর জলাশয়ঃ ⁶
(on the left margin of the first side)
18. তৎপশ্চাৎ মঠমন্দির ব্রাহ্মণ তৈল কারয়োঃ
কালিকাদেব্যা সেবা
19. ন্যংস হলদ্বয়ঃ ⁷ দাতব্যঃ ॥
(on top margin of the first side and on the right of the seal.)
20. তৎপশ্চাৎ
21. দেবীপুরস্থ
22. ন আবনব
23. লায়ঃ হল
24. দ্বয় পৰিমি-
(on the left of the seal)
25. ভাফূমঃ শ্রী
26. বিষ্ণুশ্রীতয়ে
27. শ্রীবিষ্ণবে
28. সমপিতা

¹ Read লিপ্যর্থঃ

² Read হল

³ Read ভূমিদাতব্যঃ

⁴ Read এতৎমধ্যে

⁵ Read পূৰ্ব

⁶ Read জলাশয়ঃ । There is an inverted "anunasika" sign after জলাশয়ঃ ।
Read also প্রদত্তঃ after জলাশয়ঃ ।

⁷ Read কালিকাদেব্যাঃ সেবানন্দং সহলদ্বয়ঃ

(Second Side)

শ্রীচুগা

শ্রীশ্রীকালিকাদেবী

1. এতদস্থ চতুৰ্বিংশত্যধিক সপ্তদশ শ
2. মিতে শকাব্দে বড়গোশাৰি সং
3. হ নরপতে: পত্ন্যা শ্রীশ্রীকাশা
4. স্নিগ্ধজ্ঞক মহাদেব্যা ন আবন
5. সম্বন্ধিপুৰন্দোদে ¹ সাক্ষিহলদ্ব-
6. য়েন ত্রিংশৎ কেদারপৰিমিতা
7. ভূমিঃ ৮ শ্রী তয়ে ভূমি দত্তা ²
8. ইতি আৰাঢ়স্ত পঞ্চবিংশতৌ ।

(Written apart)

৬ তি তুলি

9. ততঃ ³ পশ্চাৎ পঞ্চবিংশত্যাধিক সপ্তদশ শ
10. ত শকাব্দে বড়গোশাৰি সিংহনপতেঃ পত্ন্যা শ্রী-
11. মতী কাশাসতিদেব্যা দলৈকালিঃ সম্বন্ধিহল দ্ব
12. য় পৰিমিতেন চতুৰ্বিংশতি কেদার ভূমিৰ্ব
13. স্নহস্তপ্রমাণমানদণ্ডেন শ্রীমৎবাধাকৃষ্ণশ্রী-
14. তবে শ্রীমৎকালিকামঠমোজা ননগদস্থ ম
15. ঋণোদ্ধোলযাতার্থং তাভ্যাং দত্তা । মার্গস্ত ত্র
16. যোদশদ্বিবসীয়া লিপিরিতি ।

(Written apart)

সমেত সপ্তহল পৰিমিত মিত্তভূমিতি ⁴

¹ Read পূৰ্ব

² Read ভূমিদত্তা । one ভূমি in the line is
redundant.

³ Read তৎ

⁴ The last expression is not very clear.
This line is probably a later inter-
polation done with the purpose of
illegally increasing the quantity of
land already alienated.

TRANSLATION.

(First Side.)

(Thus) written by the queen of king Baḍagośāyi, the Purandara of Jayantipura : land measuring twenty-two halas of Govindapur village along with (its) tenants have been given by me to Kālikādevī for her pleasure, with all (my) rights abandoned and with the permission of Śrī Gaurikumārī, Śrī-Sunākumārī, Śrī-Jayantikumārī and also of king Śrī-Śrī-Vijayanārāyaṇa, for the discharge of worship of Śrī-Śrī-Kālikādevī (established) in Śrī Śrī Lilāpuri Saṁnyāsī's abode (matha) (Ll. 1-10). The stealer of what is given as gift will become a Chaudāla. For this purpose (i. e., for gift) this copper-plate has been written in 1710 Sakābdā when the Moon was in the place of Brihaspati. (This has been) verily

written in the month of Paus̥h (11. 10-14). Land measuring four halas of land is given (to the writer) for writing this (copper plate). Of these (four halas) two halas are from Nayāvanakhalā and the rest from the eastern part of Dalaikāndī village (Ll. 15-16). Later on (was given) the pasture and water-tank off Govindapur village. Later on, two halas of land have been given for Kālikādevī's pleasure derived from the service (performed) by the Brahmana and the oil-presser (attached to) the monastery (matha) and the temple (Ll. 17-19). Later on, land measuring two halas in Nayāvanakhalā (lit. New Forest Clearings) of Devipura have been given to Śrī Vishnu for the pleasure of Śrī Vishnu (Ll. 20-28.)

(Second Side.)

(Salutation to) Śrī Durgā. On the 25th of Ashādhā in 1723 Sakābdā (A. D. 1801) land measuring two and a half halas, (that is), thirty kedaras in (village) Purvaphauda attached to Nayāvana is given by the queen named Śrī Śrī Kasāyi, wife of king Baḍagośāyi for the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Kālikādevī (Ll. 1-8).

Later on, in 1725 Sakābdā (A. D. 1803) two halas of land (that is), twenty-four kedaras lying in (village) Dalaikāndī, and measured

with the rod, eight cubits long, have been given by Srimati Kāsāsātidevi, wife of king Baḍagośāyi for the pleasure of Śrī-Rādhā-kṛṣṇa and for the ceremony of 'dājātrā' of the (two) 'mañchas' (cradle-beds) lying in the Kālikāmatha and at Ujaināgara Document (executed) on the 13th day of Agrahāyaṇa (11. 9-16).

With seven halas.....(?)

THE SIGN ९ IN ANCIENT COPPER-PLATE INSCRIPTIONS OF KĀMARUPA.

(By PANDIT PADMANATH BHATTACHARYA VIDYAVINOD.)

The copper-plate inscriptions of Balavarman (i. e. the Nowgong plates)* and those of Indrapāla (i. e. the Gauhati

plates)† open with this sign ९ and so also the inscriptions on the seal‡ of Balavarman ; but the late Dr. Hœrnle who read them and published the readings in the

* Vide plate XXXV—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal Vol. LXVI, Part I, 1897.

† Vide plate III, Ibid.

‡ Vide plate XXXVII, Ibid.

Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal—overlooked the sign, probably because the impression in each case was indistinct. In the inscriptions on the seal of Ratnapala's Sualkuchi Grant, however, the sign ॐ though similarly indistinct could be noticed by Dr. Hoernle and he read it as 'Om'.* Many of the inscriptions of the Pala kings of Bengal, begin with this sign ॐ—and also another sign ॐ—for instance, the Manda Inscriptions of Gopala III opens with ॐ† and the Nara Sinha temple Inscriptions of Nayapala, opens with 'ॐ‡'; both these signs have been read as 'Om'.

Sometimes 'Om' actually occurs after ॐ or ॐ: *Vide* the Visudeva temple inscription of Gobindapala|| and the Krishna-Dwarka Temple Inscription of Nayapala|| It is strange, that in face of such distinct use of the sign ॐ or ॐ along with an ॐ (om), that sign also could be interpreted as "Om"!

In Eastern Bengal, including Sylhet, formerly§ a boy on the occasion of his 'Vidyarambha' ceremony in the fifth year of his age, was taught to write 'ॐ' first before writing क ख ग, or अ आ इ as the case may be. This sign is called "অঞ্জি" (Anji) and in fact all the three signs ॐ, ॐ and ॐ are but

the different forms of the same thing: and so ॐ or ॐ may also go by the name 'Aup'.

To a student of the Tantra, the names Ida, Pingalā and Sushumnā are familiar. These are very fine nerves not visible to the uninitiated eye, that pass through the Merudanda (Spinal Cord). The Sushumna which is in the middle has in it six Chakras—or rather lotuses (with various numbers of petals)—called Mulādhāra, Swādhishthāna, Manipūra, Anāhata, Viśuddha and Ājñā. The Mulādhāra, is situated in the vicinity of anus and has four petals in it on which there are four letters, স, ব, শ, ব, (অবৃহত) of the alphabet; the Swādhishthāna is near the generative organ and has six petals with ল, ব, য, ম, ভ, ব (বগ) on them; the Manipūra is by the navel, and has ten petals with the letters ক, প, ও, ধ, র, থ, ত, ঞ, ড, ড in them; the Anāhata is by the heart—with twelve petals containing the letters ঙ, ঙ, ঞ, ঞ, জ, জ, চ, ন, ষ, গ, ঞ, ক; the Viśuddha is by the throat and has sixteen petals with all the Vowels in them viz. অ, অ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, এ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ, ঐ; the Ājñā is located near the middle of the eyebrows and has two petals with ক, হ.

The Sushumnā then merges into a Chakra at the top called Sahasrāra (or Sahasradala for having a thousand petals).

At Mulādhāra resides in sleeping state—the Kuṇḍalinī (also called "Kulakundalinī")—meaning a female snake—in a serpentine form round a linga (emblem of Śiva). It is the duty of a devotee to awaken this Kuṇḍalinī and lead her from Mulādhāra to Sahasrāra (through intervening Chakras), to join there with "Parama Śiva" (The Supreme God). This pro-

* For Seal *Vide* Plate XII, and for its reading page 124, of J. A. S. B. Vol. LXVII, Part I, 1898.

† Plate XXX—(for reading, See Page 102), Vol. V, of the Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

‡ Plate XXVI—(for reading, See Page 78) *Ibid*.

§ Plate XXVIII—Vol. V, of the Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

|| Plate XXV—Vol. V, *Ibid*.

§ This has now become almost obsolete and the present generation hardly writes this sign.

cess is called Shat-chakrabheda—boring through the six Chakras—(Mūlādlāra to Ajñā). The Kuṇḍalīni passes through every petal (with a letter in it) and the divinity is called a “Varna Prakāśini” (illuminating the Varnas or letters) and in fact no ‘Varna’ can either be seen or heard or pronounced except through Her favour*.

Here is the reason why, at the time of Vidyārambha Her symbol (ॐ) is put down first of all and why in the inscriptions also, the same symbol (in either form ॐ or ॐ)† was incised first and then the letters.

As regards the nomenclature ‘Ānji’, it may be stated that the name occurs in a Commentary of the Tantra, as follows:—

তদ্বক্ষে তু কল প্রোক্তা অঙ্জিতি যোগিবল্লভ।
অঙ্জিত ত্রিযাগুদেখ্য মণিকবা। তদ্বক্ষে হিন্দ-
নেঃক।

Above the Devidala (two petalled Chakra i. e. the Ajñā Chakra) is the Seat of the ‘Kala’ (literally part) which is very dear to the Yogin (devotee); this is called Ānji; this looks like a curved line‡. In fact this is no other than the Serpentine

Kuṇḍalīni just emerged out of the Shat-Chakras and thus the devotee is delighted to see Her in this transcendent stage—on way to the Goal—Sahasrāra Chakra—within the Crown of the head.

As regards the meaning of the name Ānji—it is said to be derived from the root অঞ্জ to luminate; ‘অ’ (the representative letter of the Alphabet*) is luminated by Her—indicating that no letter can be ‘expressed’ except through Her.

From what has been stated above it will be seen that the sign ॐ, ॐ or ॐ—does not represent any particular letter or Syllable (like ঔ)—but is the sign of the Kuṇḍalīni—the Serpent—shaped divinity that pervades every letter and regulates its pronunciation;—She is in fact the creative energy bringing out every letter. In whatever form ॐ or ॐ or ॐ—She is seen at the beginning of any inscription, the right way is to reproduce that form‡ and it will not be correct to put ঔ to represent the same. ঔ is the representative of the Vedic Brahma, whereas ॐ or ॐ or ॐ (i. e. Ānji) is the symbol of the Tantric divinity “Kuṇḍalīni”.

* অক্ষরানুকরণে অ- (Bhagavad Gītā X- 33).

† অ অ ন ঙি প্রকাশ্য তই ত্রিযাগান্ ত্রিযাগীপ্—This is the interpretation put in the word by a distinguished *Sanāt* of Bengal—Pandit Panchanana Tārakata—in his article on “Ānji” published in the Haraprasada Samrardhana Lekha Mala Vol I P. 267 et Seq.

‡ With the word “Ānji” within parenthesis after it, e. g. ॐ (Ānji).

§ ঔমিত্ত্বকাক্ষরং ব্রহ্ম—(Bhagavad Gītā VIII- 13)

|| It is only the Pandits well versed in the Tantra who knew the real import of Ānji: when in our boyhood we wrote ॐ before ক খ গ, the sign was interpreted as representing the head and belly of the Elephant-headed corpulent Deity Ganeśa!

* In Her process upwards (or downwards) Kuṇḍalīni of the Serpentine form—is in dancing posture: ‘৐’ shows Her turning leftwise and ‘৐’ Her turning rightwise; “৐” represents Her turning both ways.

† The sound is of four stages—Parā Pasyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikhari and only the last (i. e. Vaikhari) stage is audible: the Parā can never be heard: while the Pasyanti and Madhyama are audible only to the initiated ears.

‡ Sometimes the sublime is seen connected with the grotesque: the metallic hook tied to a Hooka (hubble-bubble) to fasten it to a Katcha wall, is called ‘Ānji’ evidently on account of the similarity in shape.

PRĀG-JYOTISHA, KĀMARŪPA AND ḌAVĀKA.

(By Prof. PRABODH CHANDRA SEN, M.A.)

The Jaina lexicographer Hemachandra, of the 12th century, apparently identifies the two peoples when he says 'The Prāg-Jyotishas are the Kāmarūpas' but there are reasons to think that they were originally two distinct peoples. In the Mahabharata and the Ramayana the Prāg-Jyotishas alone are mentioned and not the Kāmarūpas; in Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa both these names are mentioned together; while in latter literature the Kāmarūpas become prominent as the people of the Upper Brahmaputra valley and are regarded as identical with the Prāg-Jyotishas. How this change came to pass perhaps requires a word of explanation.

First, let us consider who the Prāg-Jyotishas were. It seems that, as the name implies, they were the eastern branch of a people called the Jyotishas who appear to have spread all over northern India. In the Brihatsamhitā of Varāhamihir we find mention of the Prāg-Jyotishas in the eastern region, while in the Madhyadesa are located another people called the Upa-Jyotishas. Bhaṭṭopala in his commentary quotes a passage from an old work of Parāśara which mention a peoples called the Uttama-Jyotishas among the peoples of the Madhyadesa; it may be that they are the same as the Upa-Jyotishas of the Brihatsamhitā. Again, in the Mahabharata we are told that Arjuna in his northern campaign fought with Bhagadatta, the king of Prāg-Jyotisha, who was surrounded by the Kirātas, Chinas and Mlecchas living in the sea-coast region (mlecchāṇṣāgarādūpa-vasibhiḥ), while Nakula in his western campaign is said to have conquered the Uttara-Jyotisha who must have been located somewhere in the country of the five rivers (pañchanada), for, in the account of Nakula's conquests they are associated not only with the 'Pañchanada' country, but also with the river Sarasvatī, the Rāmōthas, the Hāra-

Hūnas and the Madras of Sākala (modern Sialkot in the Punjab).

From a consideration of all these facts it seems that Uttara-Jyotishas, Uttama-Jyotishas, the Upa-Jyotishas and the Prāg-Jyotishas were really different branches of a people called the Jyotishas who appear to have spread all over northern India from the Punjab to Assam. Further research may bring to light the existence of other branches of the Jyotisha people. Thus there can perhaps be no doubt that the Prāg-Jyotishas or the eastern Jyotishas were so called because they represented the eastern branch of the main people. A question may be asked as to whether this people went over northern India from west to east, or from east to west. The data at our disposal do not enable us to give a definite answer to this question; but the analogy of the Uttara-Kurus and the Kurus proper, the Uttara-Madras and the Madras proper and also a general consideration of the movements of races and tribes over northern India are probably in favour of thinking that the Jyotishas moved from west to east. If this inference has any value, then it would appear probable that the Prāg-Jyotishas were not of Mongolian extraction; and this is perhaps why Bhagadatta is regarded with so much respect and kindness by Krishna when addressing Yudhisthira—'Bhagadatta is thy father's aged friend; he is noted for his deference to thy father in deed and word, and he is mentally bound by affection and devoted to thee like a father.' (Karnaparvan, M.Bh.).

But we should remember that Bhagadatta, the king of the Prāg-Jyotishas, is always associated with the Kirātas, the Chinas and the Mlecchas who were undoubtedly of Mongolian extraction and hence hated as aliens by the Brahmanical Aryans of the Aryavartta. It seems that when this eastern section of the Jyotisha people

reached the banks of the Lauhitya or the Brahmaputra in modern Assam, with which they are always associated in literature, they found the country already occupied by peoples of Mongolian origin called Kirātas, etc. It was perhaps because the Prāg-Jyotishas must have, in course of time, been closely associated with these foreign peoples that they themselves soon came to be looked upon as foreigners. This will probably explain why in some passages of the Mahabharata and particularly of the Harivamśa the Prāg-Jyotishas are referred to as Asuras, Dānavas or Mlecchas hostile to the Brahmanical gods, particularly to Vishnu or Krishna.

It is however very remarkable that while the Prāg-Jyotishas together with the Kirātas, the Chinās, the Mlecchas are repeatedly mentioned in the epics, the Kāmarūpas, a well-known people inhabiting the Upper Brahmaputra valley, are not mentioned even once in those works, again, in later literature while the Kāmarūpas appear as an important people, the Prāg-Jyotishas are seldom mentioned and, even if mentioned, they are regarded as synonymous with the Kāmarūpas. Evidently the conclusion is that the Kāmarūpas appeared on the scene in a later period and in course of time indistinguishably mixed up with the Prāg-Jyotishas.

It seems highly probable that the Kāmarūpas were a people of foreign origin and entered the Brahmaputra valley from the north-east. It is important to note here that the easternmost province of the country of Assam, on the very confines of Burma, and on the other side of the river Dikshu which marks the religious limit of Kāmarūpa on the east, was known by the name of Namrup. It is apparent that like modern Kamrup, Namrup also represents the name of a tribe which seems to have been akin, as the two names suggest, to the ancient Kāmarūpas in racial affinity. The existence of the two tracts called Namrup and Kamrup extending from the confines of Burmah up to the modern Gauhati region is perhaps a clear indication that the two tribes, whom these two names represent were of alien origin and entered the

Brahmaputra valley through the north-eastern gates of India. This inference seems to be confirmed by the evidence of the Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa as we shall presently see.

As to the different periods of time when the Prāg-Jyotishas and the Kāmarūpas came to occupy the Upper valley of the Lauhitya we are not in a position to come to any definite conclusion. In the Arthasāstra of Kautilya there is a reference to the trans-Lauhitya (pāra-lauhitya) country, that is, the modern Gauhati region; but there is no indication there as to which people, the Prāg-Jyotishas or the Kāmarūpas, were in possession of the country at that time. The epic references to the Prāg-Jyotishas contain no hint for ascertaining the time of their occupation of the Brahmaputra valley.

It is not improbable that the Kirātas, the Chinās and the Mlecchas, who are associated with the Prāg-Jyotishas in the Mahabharata may have included the tribe which in a later period came to be known by the name Kāmarūpa. But the earliest reference to the Kāmarūpas by name is to be found in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta of the 4th century A. C. This inscription refers to the Kingdom of Kāmarūpa as situated on the extreme eastern fringe of the Gupta empire; but it does not supply us with further information for determining its exact location in the Brahmaputra valley. In the fourth canto of Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa reference has been made to the king of Prāg-Jyotisha on the left bank of the Lauhitya and immediately after this is mentioned the king of the Kāmarūpas. It may be concluded from this that in the time of Kālidāsa the Prāg-Jyotishas and the Kāmarūpas were still regarded as two different peoples living side by side. If this conclusion be correct, then it should perhaps be supposed that the Prāg-Jyotishas occupied the country lying immediately to the east of the Lauhitya, as Kālidāsa suggests, and that the Kāmarūpas were located further to the east. Thus it would appear that even in the time of Kālidāsa the Kāmarūpas occupied a position midway between the region known as Namrup from which

place they seem to have been moving westward, and the Gauhati region which place they subsequently, evidently after the time of Kālidāsa, came to occupy.

So it seems reasonable to conclude that in the time of Samudragupta the Kāmarūpas occupied only the eastern part of the Upper Brahmaputra valley, the western part, that is, the Gauhati region, being occupied by the Prāg-Jyotishas. But as the Kāmarūpa kingdom is referred to in the Allahabad inscription as a 'pratyanta' or border kingdom, the conclusion seems unavoidable that the Prāg-Jyotisha kingdom, to which Kālidāsa refers, formed apart of Samudragupta's empire. That the lower Assam valley was really included in the Gupta empire seems to be confirmed by the fact that the date used in the Tezpur rock-inscription of Harjjaravarman has been explicitly referred to the Gupta era (510 G. E. = 829 A. C.) If Samudragupta's empire really included a part of the Assam valley, then one is tempted to identify Balavarman of the Allahabad Pillar inscription with the king of the same name who was the son of Samudravarmān, as we know from the Nidhanpur copper plates; and indeed scholars are of opinion that Samudravarmān, the ancestor of Bhāskaravarman, was a contemporary of Samudragupta and that his son Balavarman should be identified with Balavarman, one of the nine kings of Āryāvarta who were overthrown by Samudragupta. But there are some difficulties in this identification. We know from the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman that the line of kings to which Samudravarmān and his son Balavarman belonged ruled over Kāmarūpa and not Prāg-Jyotisha, if this Balavarman was one of the nine kings of Āryāvarta who were forcibly uprooted by Samudragupta, his descendants could not have ruled upto about the middle of the seventh century as we know from the Nidhanpur plates; and Samudragupta's inscription tells us that the king of Kāmarūpa only submitted to Samudragupta's power and was not overthrown by him. Kālidāsa makes a second reference to the king of Kāmarūpa in his Raghuvamśa (VII, 17), which shows that this kingdom

had already acquired much prestige during his time.

In the seventh century A. C. both Bāṇa and Hiuen-Tsang regarded Bhāskaravarman as the king of Kāmarūpa and they are supported by the evidence of the Nidhanpur copper-plate inscriptions. Towards the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the 12th century when king Vaidyadeva flourished Kāmarūpa formed a mandala within the bhukti of Prāg-Jyotisha; this fact also seems to indicate that Prāg-Jyotisha and Kāmarūpa, though very closely associated, at one time formed two distinct janapadas. And as the ancient bhuktis were generally named after some important cities belonging to them, Prāg-Jyotisha may well have been the name of a city in the ancient Lauhitya valley, but we are not yet in a position to identify it. Thus we see that even in the 12th century some sort of distinction was made between Prāg-Jyotisha and Kāmarūpa, though Hemachandra, who flourished in the same century, fully identified the two names. This identification may perhaps be due to some such fact that Kāmarūpa in later times came to be regarded as the name of a kingdom or janapada of which the Pura or head-quarters had the name of Prāg-Jyotisha. All later references to Assam, literary and epigraphic, are by the name Kāmarūpa and not Prāg-Jyotisha, e.g., in the Vikramāṅkadevacharitam of Bilhana and the Madhainagar grant of Lakshmanaseua (vikrama-vasakṛita-kāmarūpa-bhūpa).

It now remains to make a brief mention of another ancient janapada of Assam, namely, Duvāka. The only reference to this janapada is to be found in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta. In that inscription Duvāka has been mentioned as one of the "pratyanta" kingdoms of Samudragupta's empire, along with Samatāṭa and Kāmarūpa. Scholars have been generally at a loss regarding the identification of this old kingdom. Now, it is in the prose portion of the Allahabad inscription that the mention of Duvāka is to be found, and there it is placed between the pratyanta janapadas of Samatāṭa and Kāmarūpa. Hence it is reasonable to suppose that

Davāka lay somewhere between those two janāpadas. Scholars have identified Samatāta with the region lying to the east of the modern Dacca division and including at least portions of the present districts of Tippera and Sylhet; and we have tried to show in the preceding pages that Kāmarūpa in the days of the Gupta emperors occupied the eastern part of the upper Brahmaputra valley to the east of the modern district of Kāmrup. Kāmarūpa in those days most probably included the modern Tezpur region. So ancient Davāka must be placed somewhere to the south of Tezpur and to the north of Sylhet. Curiously enough a place of considerable importance is still called Daboka in the district of Nowgong, (vide maps in Gait's History of Assam and the District Gazetteer of Nowgong) The situation of modern Daboka in the Nowgong district so much satisfies the location of

Davāka that can be inferred from Samudragupta's inscription, and the two names Daboka and Davāka are so completely similar that there can scarcely be any doubt as to the identification of ancient Davāka with modern Daboka and its neighbourhood in the Nowgong district (See Janmabhūmi, 1327 B.S., Jyāistha, pp 49-54). Unfortunately, however, the Allahabad inscription provides us with no information about Davāka besides that in the days of Samudragupta it was a kingdom and that its king, like the kings of Samatāta and Kāmarūpa, gratified the imperious commands of the Gupta emperor by giving him taxes, obeying his orders and doing him homage. Besides this little information the history of Davāka before and after the days of Samudragupta, like that of Satiyaputta of the time of Asoka, has been completely lost to us.

N.B. The identification of Davāka mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta with the Kopili Valley known to this day as Davakā is probably correct. The writer's theory that Prāg-Jyotisha and Kāmarūpa were separate tracts or kingdoms will however be generally rejected. This article is published with a view to elicit criticism and discussion. [Ed. J. A. R. S.]

EARLY HISTORY OF TEA.

(By DINES CHANDRA DATTA, M.A.)

"Confucious, the great Chinese reformer, having registered a vow to the gods that he would keep awake for seven days at a stretch, found its execution rather more difficult than he had expected. All possible means were employed to keep his eyes open; nevertheless on the seventh day he fell asleep. When he awoke and found he had

broken his vow, he exclaimed: 'Vile traitors, I shall prevent your ever closing again', and cutting off his eyelids he threw them away. The pitying gods made tea bush to spring up where the eyelids fell, in order to assist future devotees in their exercises."

A CHINESE LEGEND

1. Tea is one of the two commodities for which India is famous in the markets of the world. It is the one thing to which Assam owes much of her wealth and importance. In the present paper an attempt is made to trace the circumstances that led to the development of tea culture in Assam.

2. It is generally known that the habit of tea originated in China (i) and her neighbours subsequently learnt it from her. When the Westerners visited her shores, they too came to appreciate the virtues of the leaf. Tea was introduced into Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It appears that tea was first brought to India by an Arab merchant but the Arabs, who dominated in the eastern commerce before the advent of the Europeans, did little to introduce it in this land. It is now known that some of the hill men beyond Sadiya were long habituated to tea and might have discovered its virtues independently of China

but their influence on civilised India was nil. It was left therefore to the Anglo Indian merchants not merely to introduce tea through Calcutta but to develop and extend its culture in this land.

3. Among the Europeans, the Portuguese were the first to open up commercial intercourse with China (1517), but they did not give much attention to tea. The Dutch established themselves at Bantam early in the seventeenth century, and thereafter learnt the use of tea and also introduced it into Europe as an article of commerce. Throughout the century they continued to import tea from China, but the volume of consumption in Europe expanded only slowly. Writes Macpherson, "It is probable that the Portuguese never imported any considerable quantity of tea, but the Dutch East India Company paid some attention to it as an article of commerce, soon after the commencement of their trade; and they probably

(i) The early history of tea is shrouded in obscurity and the question of its original home was long a subject of controversy. It is now generally held that tea is native to the southeastern Asia and that the Chinese were the first to use it as a beverage. Little, however, is known as to how it came to be used by man. The Chinese literature on this subject is full of conflicting, mythological traditions. The discovery of the virtues of tea is sometimes ascribed to Emperor Chunang (2737 B.C.) to whom all agricultural and medical knowledge is traced. Sometimes it is ascribed to Budhidharma, the celebrated monk who came from India on a missionary expedition (543 A.D.). But it appears that tea was known much earlier and was already a general beverage in the sixth century. It is believed that in the Chinese Encyclopedia "Pent Sao" the compilation of which goes back to 2,700 B.C., there are some references to the peculiar qualities of good tea. Again, obscure, vague reference to tea is believed to exist in "She King" a book written by Confucius, the philosopher. Cha Pu, another well-known writer, writes more definitely on the subject asserting that plants were discovered by the Chinese at various times in the hills of the several provinces but that general attention was at first attracted to it during the time of the Hun dynasty (211-279 A.D.). Loyu or Yulu who flourished in the Tang dynasty about 780 A.D., has an interesting account of tea from which we learn that the use of tea was so common in the eighth century as to encourage the authorities to levy a tax on its consumption (793 A.D.). By the end of the eighth century the Muhamadans established free commercial intercourse with China and the use of tea at that time is mentioned by the Moorish historians and travellers. Soliman, an Arabian merchant visiting China in 850 A.D., describes "Sah" as the usual beverage of the Chinese. From China the habit of tea crossed the gulf into Japan and there its cultivation was established in the ninth century. The habit of tea also extended to Tibet, Mongolia, Turkestan and other places. In the ninth and 10th centuries there had developed a brisk domestic trade in tea and an export trade to Tibet. During the Sung dynasty trade in brick tea was so important and extensive that brick tea tablets came to be used as currency in the big horse fairs of China. About this time brick tea packed in gold cases was sent to the Emperor as tribute.

supplied most of the very small demand of Europe during the greatest part of the seventeenth century. In the year 1641 we find the virutes of "Thee" celebrated by Tulpus, an eminent physician and consul of Amsterdam, who was followed by several other physicians among whom the most famous was Cornelius Bontinkoe who wrote in the year 1678 (i). But notwithstanding all their commendations, tea came so very slowly in request in Holland, that in the year 1670 the use of tea was unknown in Dort, as we are told by Franc Valentin, a native of that town in the history of the East Indies." (ii). It is not definitely known when tea was first introduced in England but by the middle of the seventeenth century it was coming into use and in 1657, a regular tea house was opened at Exchange Alley, London. By 1860, it had come to be "used as a regalia in high treatments and entertainments and presents made thereof to princes and grantees." Its novelty in this period is evidenced by the following line from Pepys' diary (28th Sept. 1860) "I did send for a cup of tea a china drink of which I have never drunk before"; and also in the same diary "I find my wife making of tea—a drink which Mr Pelling the pothecary tells her is good for her cold and defluxions." In 1662 Charles II, married princess Catherine of Portugal who was fond of tea, having been

accustomed to it in her own country. Henceforward tea became a fashionable drink in London. In 1664 the E. I. Company made a present of a small quantity of tea (2 lbs. 2 oz.) to the Queen as one of the novelties and two years later a similar present of another parcel was made. (iii)

4 The small quantity of tea required in England in those days were procured from the continent where the E. I. Co., also made their purchases for the above mentioned presents. The price in London was very high—60 Shillings a pound, and even as early as 1668 the Court of Directors issued orders to their factory at Bantam "to send home by their ships 100 lbs of the best tay (tea) they could get." Next year the Company received their first invoice of tea amounting to 143½ lbs. It was however not till 1677 that the Company seriously turned their attention to the tea trade, and in 1678 they imported a fairly large amount of 4713 lbs. This proved too much for a time and literally glutted the market. It even created a hostile opinion, one gentleman going to the length of asserting that those of his friends who called for tea, instead of pipes and wines, were only acquiring a base unworthy Indian practice and filthy customs. "Some who thought themselves philosophers and philanthropists" writes Macpherson "and others who supposed themselves to be

(i) It is possible that tea was at first used as a drug and its use as a beverage was a subsequent development. It appears from the writings of Cha Pu that the plants were used medicinally prior to 500 A. D. About the time of Loyu 780 A. D., tea was prepared as cakes. Sometimes these cakes were ground to powder and used as an infusion, perhaps more for their medicinal properties as promoting digestion. It is not known at what period the process of roasting and drying the leaves was introduced but the superiority of these modes is acknowledged by the author of Cha Pu who opines that the use of tea as a beverage probably originated in the sixteenth century A. D.

See—Ball, Cultivation and Manufacture of Tea, 1848.

(ii) History of Commerce with India, page 130.

(iii) Waller in a panegyrical ode on queen's birth day writes:—

"The best of queens and the best of herbs we owe
To that bold nation who the way did show
To the fair region where the sun doth rise
Whose rich productions we justly prize".

For sometime tea was known to Europe, it was universally called a herb.

Martin—Past and present state of the Tea Trade of England, etc., page 17, (1832).

patriots and political economists exclaimed against the use of tea as pernicious to the health of the people and at best an useless luxury attainable only by the most opulent classes" (iv). But inspite of such denunciations the use of tea was extending and in 1684 the Directors sent out advices to Madras, "We have occasion to make presents therein to our great friends at Court, we would have you to send us yearly five or six cannisters of the very best and freshest tea." After their expulsion from Java (1686) the English obtained their supplies through the Company's factors at Madras whither they were brought by the Chinese junks. The first direct purchase was made at Amoy but it was not until 1715 that a well-organised and regular tea trade was inaugurated and a factory established at Canton.

By the close of the seventeenth century tea had ceased to be a novelty in London (v) and during the next century the progress of consumption was rapid and unbroken. In the three years 1697-1699, the average annual importations were under 2000 lbs., but in the eight following years it rose to above 6000 lbs. The following figures give the quantity that entered into home consumption (imports less re-exports since 1711 (vi) :—

Year.			Lbs.
1711	...	...	141995
1720	...	...	237904
1730	...	...	537016
1740	...	...	1302549
1750	...	...	2114922
1760	...	...	2293613
1770	...	...	7723538
1780	...	...	5538315
1790	...	...	14693299
1800	...	...	20358702

Year.			Lbs.
1810	...	...	19098244
1820	...	...	22452050
1830	...	...	30047079

5. These figures, though striking, do not tell the whole tale. The popularity of a food article is largely a question of its quality and cheapness. But the circumstances were favourable to none of them. The voyage from China by the cape route took a long time and caused tea to lose much of its flavour, strength and freshness. The cultivating conditions as also the whole trade economy in China lacked an intelligent and efficient guidance which could ensure fair quality and ready and expensive supplies. Tea was cultivated by cottagers on small plots in family gardens, the pressure of population relegating the culture to places unfit for the growth of food crops and therefore comparatively barren. The cultivators lacked the means to develop the culture nor had they ever the encouragement to take to tea as any thing but a subsidiary employment. The expansion of the export trade no doubt brought immense riches to the empire but they were appropriated by an army of middlemen that stood between the growers and the exporters. The organisation of the internal trade in tea was as follows :—After plucking, the leaves were taken by the growers to the nearest markets where the persons dealing in the line collected them and manufactured them in part, i.e., exposed them to be dried by the wind under the shade and afterwards further dried in a heated ware-house. The tea merchants or their agents would then come to the tea districts and would purchase the dried leaves from the local merchants. They would then

(iv) History of Commerce, page 132.

Imports of tea in the previous six years amounted in all to 318 lbs. only. And imports in the 6 subsequent years were 410 lbs.

(v) It will be interesting to note that the infusion as used in England in early days was kept in barrels and was taken like beer after warming it. Even as late as 1700 in a book on the manners of London a cask of cold tea is mentioned as a suitable present to a Magistrate's lady by way of bribe for influencing his worship to grant the license of a coffee house. (See Capital March, 1929.)

(vi) Milburn—Oriental Commerce, Vol. II, p. 534.

complete the process of manufacture, sort them, make them into parcels, each with a distinctive name in conformity to quality. But it was not unoften that these brands proved unreliable and their soundness was largely a question of honest acts on the parts of the agents concerned. These agents were mostly small men with scanty means and they carried on with advances from the "Hong" who controlled the whole trade but only occasionally exercised a small amount of supervision to ensure proper quality.

"Hong" were a body of licensed merchants through whom alone the foreign trade of China could be legally conducted. They thus constituted a strong monopoly of buyers and sellers fixing prices and limiting demand and supply. The Chinese authorities were suspicious of foreigners and treated them with contempt. Their trade was tolerated only because it brought a decent revenue to the Imperial Exchequer. Vexatious regulations were imposed. Canton was the only port open and there also the foreigners were not allowed beyond prescribed limits. Tea was taken to that port by land and rivers, the cheaper ocean transport being prohibited for fiscal reasons. Such restrictions naturally encouraged much clandestine traffic but that only increased the risk of the whole affair. For all practical purposes the foreigners were at the mercy of the Hong, and of the corrupt rapacious officials of the Imperial Government who had to be frequently propitiated for the favour of trade.

Such things were not, evidently calculated to foster a growing volume of commerce, far less to ensure a cheap, expansive supply and a fair quality of the products. The Hong were often persuaded to send their pursers or clerks to supervise the manufacture of "a few chops of good tea" but these things were not so profitable to them as the inferior sorts. They did it under

pressure from the company and in expectation of a larger share of business allotted to them. On the whole this clumsy organisation made it difficult for an increased demand to find a response in increased supply except perhaps in the supply of the inferior stuff. So far as the green tea was concerned the supply was almost inexpandible.

6. But the difficulties were not confined in China only. The monopoly of the E. I. Company was in itself a great handicap, and when at a later stage the company rose to be a territorial sovereign, its attention was divided between Government and Commerce with results wholesome to neither. In the eighteenth century tea had grown to be a necessity of life and the Company was legally bound to maintain a sufficient supply in the London market at a price which was more or less rigidly determined.* The procedure of the Company was like this:— They would every season form the best estimate of the quantity that would be required to comply with their legal obligations as also for the purpose of keeping one year's consumption on hand. The cost was then estimated and the means of payment provided. This latter problem (*i.e.*, the problem of finance) was always a baffling one. Even long before the development of the tea trade the Company had turned their attention to China in the expectation that the country would offer an extensive market for the British goods and pay specie in return, a particularly desirable thing in view of the growing clamour of the bullionists who denounced the East India trade as a perpetual drain of the national gold. In this object the Company were, however, disappointed for several reasons. The Chinese Emperor was a bullionist himself and would tolerate nothing that threatened a depletion of the Chinese gold. For a long time the Dutch rivalry would not allow the English to obtain a footing in China, and

* "The Company were by law (24, Geo. 30, Cap. 88) precluded from putting their tea for sale at a price which upon the whole of their teas put up at any one sale, should exceed the prime cost with freight and charges of importation together with the lawful interest from the time of the arrival of such teas in Great Britain and the common premium for insurance as a compensation for the sale risk involved."

when that difficulty was removed the Chinese were found to be anti-foreigners, not having much relish for foreign goods, especially as there were Imperial edicts directed against foreign goods prescribing the dress and costume of the Chinese people. Further the British woollen which might have some demand in the colder north were admitted only through a port in the distant south and the long land transport made them costly. In spite of these odds the Company persisted with British manufactures, partly out of patriotic motives and partly because the practice was enjoined upon them in earlier years. But the Chinese demand expanded only slowly. With the development of the tea trade the problem of the international trade balance became more difficult than ever. Every year the question was how to pay for tea. There were mainly four channels through which the means of payment could be procured. The Company bought cotton in India for consignments to China which cotton was paid for in rupees received in re-investments of that portion of the territorial charges of India which was payable in England. Another was the receipt of dollars in China in exchange for bills upon India, which bills were paid in rupees, as in the previous case. There was a demand for these bills among merchants who imported goods from India and with the growth of opium trade the demand was always strong. But, the extent of finance provided by these means were of course limited by the Rupee resources in India. A third mode was the purchase of British manufactures for consignments to China which was necessarily paid for in sterling money. In addition to these various operations a small sum was provided by bills drawn in China upon the Company in London.*

This cumbrous process of finance had the supreme demerit of raising the prime cost of tea in London on the basis of which the prices at Company's sales were deter-

mined. For in computing the prime costs the Company included with some justice "the sum expended in sterling money in providing the means of purchase whether by direct pecuniary remittances, or by consignments of goods including losses on them which, with reference to the object, could be regarded in no other light than as remittances; together with the freight and charges of the homeward investment of tea". Perhaps the cash purchases would have reduced the cost but that was not possible, firstly because it was perhaps not practicable to provide by bills the amount of funds required, and secondly, even if it was practicable, the Company's commercial activities were so much intermingled with their territorial sovereignty in India that such a thing "would have been incompatible with the existing financial relations between India and England". That was indeed one of the weak points in the whole structure.†

7 The high prices of tea in England encouraged considerable smuggling and adulteration. A good deal of worthless stuff was pressed into the market and was mixed by retailers with better sorts, thus depressing the average quality of tea for the British consumers. For this the excise policy of Government was also responsible. Since 1660 the infusion as used in the coffee houses was subject to a duty of 8d. per gallon and this continued till 1689 when a duty of 5s. per pound was levied. This duty kept down the consumption for a long time. With slight and temporary modifications the policy of charging tea heavily continued throughout the eighteenth century with results briefly summarised by McCulloch as follows‡:—

"Previously to 1745 tea was charged with an excise duty of no less than 4s. per lb., and with a custom duty of 14 % *ad valorem*..... There was however much illicit traffic to check which the Parliament reduced the duty from 4s. to 1s. and 25 %

* Evidences before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on East India affairs (1880). P. 38 to 37.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Dictionary of Commerce.

ad valorem, and as the price of tea sold at the Company's sales was about 4s. per lb., 25 % was in fact 1s. per lb.—This measure was eminently successful.”

“Notwithstanding the duties were again increased in 1759, and fluctuated between that epoch and 1784 from about 65 % to 120 % *ad valorem*. Revenue did not increase proportionately and the smuggling was carried on in an infinitely greater extent than in any former period. In the nine years preceding 1780, above 118,000,000 lbs. of tea were exported from China to Europe in ships belonging to the Continent and about 50,000,000 lbs. in ships belonging to England. But from best informations available it appears that real consumption was just the reverse of the quantities imported; and while the consumption of British dominions amounted to 13,000,000 lbs. a year, the consumption of the Continent did not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ millions. If this statement be nearly correct, it follows that an annual supply of nearly 8 million lbs. were smuggled.* But that was not all; for many of the retail sellers who purchased tea at the Company's sales being in a great measure beaten out of the market were tempted to adulterate their teas with sloe and ash-leaves. In 1784 the duty on tea was reduced from 11s. to 12½ %. In 1795 the duty was again raised to 25 %; and after successive augmentations in 1797, 1800 and 1803 it was raised in 1806 to 90 % *ad valorem* at which it continued till 1819 when it was raised to 100 % on all teas that brought above 2s. per lb., at the

Company's sales.....”

“While the quantity of tea at the Company's sales was rapidly augmented in consequence of the reduction of duty (1784) the quantity of tea imported to continent from China which had in 1784 amounted to 19 millions lbs., declined with still greater rapidity and in 1791 was reduced to 2,291,500 lbs.....”

“It appears that allowing for increase of population the consumption of tea in Great Britain was stationary from 1800 to 1834. This was because of the increased use of coffee, enhanced duty and the monopoly of the E. I. Co.”

8. In spite of these drawbacks, the progress of tea consumption in England was unprecedented. With the reduction of duty in 1784 tea became an economic substitute, to the middle and lower classes, for malt liquor the rising price of which had occasioned great hardships for these people.† From the mother country the tea-habit spread to the Colonies and in the 18th century the Britishers became the largest tea drinkers in the World. On the continent the tea consumption, though high in the seventeenth century, fell off in the eighteenth. In 1666 the quantity imported from China to Europe was 17,000,000 lbs. A hundred years later, or rather in the nine years preceding 1780 the imports into the Continent were on average 13,198,201 lbs. per year. Of this, again, a substantial portion found its way to the English Market where “the demand was sufficiently strong to compensate the foreigners for the risk of running it into England”. The reduction of duty in 1784 was successful in checking the practice and from this point the Con-

* According to other authorities the amount of tea smuggled from Continent was much greater. See, Martin—Past and Present State of the tea trade of England and of the Continent of Europe and of the America, (1832).

† Macpherson—History of Commerce, p. 132.

tinental trade gradually dwindled down.* In Central and Western Europe tea generally yielded place to Coffee, and though in France the tea-habit once showed signs of improvement the expectation was not maintained. In Germany tea was drunk in some parts but the people generally preferred Coffee for the breakfast and beer and wine at other meals. It was estimated in 1830 that the tea-consumption of the civilised world besides England came to 22,000,000 lbs. while the consumption of England was about 33,000,000 lbs.

In the eighteenth century the East India Company had developed a considerable re-exports trade in tea with the American and other Colonies and their monopoly of this trade continued till the unhappy rupture with America.† But previous to the rupture, the consumption in the union was considerable and the tea-habit had become general even among the blackwoodmen. As soon as possible the U. S. A. therefore opened a direct trade with China and in 1785 the Americans exported from China 880,100 lbs of tea—being their first importation from Canton. Five years later the consumption of tea in the U. S. A. was estimated at 3,047,242 lbs and in 1806 their exports from Canton was 11,702,800 lbs. They also built up a re-exports trade with their neighbours but their trade, as compared with that of the English, was not so

flourishing and was much hampered by the usual difficulties at Canton.‡

9. The phenomenal expansion of the consumption in England created wide interest in the tea and stimulated a demand for freer trade conditions. Agitation against the Company's monopoly was persistent and growing, and by the end of 18th century this monopoly came to be regarded as a serious handicap to the progressive expansion of a trade in which the national interests were so widely involved. It was believed that the open traders such as the citizens of the U. S. A., were not only purchasing their tea cheaper but were bringing forth a supply of a much better quality. On behalf of the Company it was urged that their influence was a wholesome check to the vagaries of Chinese officials at Canton and that strong, united action was necessary to resist exactions and other hampering conditions. The advocates of the Company also argued with some justice that, in view of the uncertain tenor of things, a regular supply of tea was not possible and that the prices of tea would fluctuate seriously from year to year without their steadying influence. The whole thing was a matter of higgling between the Company and the Hong and the Company was successful in keeping the price steady in spite of tremendous odds.

* Amount of tea shipped at Canton on board foreign ships :—

Year.	lbs.	Year.	lbs.
1783 ...	19,072,300	1800 ...	3,968,267
1785 ...	15,715,900	1805 ...	1,809,466
1790 ...	2,291,560	1807 ...	1,444,266
1795 ...	2,759,800		

Martin—Past and Present State of the Tea Trade 1832.

† Quantity re-exported from England (Ref. Milburn—Oriental Commerce, Vol. II, p. 534) :—

Year.	lbs.	Year.	lbs.
1711 ...	14,221	1771 ...	1,232,217
1721 ...	854,146	1781 ...	1,444,920
1731 ...	154,855	1791 ...	2,171,477
1741 ...	847,754	1800 ...	3,019,989
1751 ...	216,265	1810 ...	3,918,813
1761 ...	243,496		

‡ See, Martin.

•10. But even with the Company the difficulties were immense. Apart from the usual disadvantages, the whole trade could be brought to a standstill on the slightest pretexts. Instances were not rare when the whole British trade at Canton was threatened to be stopped, or even stopped on the most trivial considerations.* It is with great difficulty and tactful management that the company succeeded in pulling on. The growth of the tea-trade had also certain wholesome reactions. By the close of the 18th century the British woollens, tin from Cornwall and other British products were finding their way in increasing quantities to the Chinese markets.† The disruption with Russia at the time of Empress Catherine gave a further stimulus to the expansion of the woollen trade and it was believed that a personal embassy from the King of England to the Emperor of China might improve matters further. Accordingly Lord Macartney was deputed in 1792 to secure for the English the privilege of sending goods to stations further north than Canton where the demand for the English woollen might be stronger. The embassy was a complete failure, and another similar attempt made in 1805 (when the Parliament deputed Sir John Stauton) met with no better success. China was in no mood to accept the British goods for her celestial leaf and the only article which her people would take on an extensive scale was a demoralising drug the entrance of which into the country was legally prohibited. Any how, tea continued to be exchanged mainly for silver and opium.

But here again the position of the Company was untenable. The growing commerce in opium was rightly regarded as objectionable and was prohibited by an Imperial Edict in 1796. There was, of course, a gulf of difference between the law and the practice in China, and the opium

trade continued to flourish at the connivance of the corrupt officials at Canton. On the face of prohibitions the Company, of course, could not import opium on its own account but they had to encourage the trade and shield it out of necessity.

11. In order to give our readers an idea of the extent to which the British tea-trade was dependent upon opium, we shall discuss this point a bit further. From a statement of the British trade at the port of Canton for the year ending on 30th June 1829, it appears that the exports on account of the Company were valued at 8,765,155 dollars and imports at 4,518,957 dollars. This left a heavy balance in favour of China and was met mostly by bills drawn on India and sold to the private traders—mostly Company's servants. The value of imports on private account was 16,845,643 dollars of which 11,243,496 dollars comprised opium from Malwa, Patna and Benares. The total imports on private as well as on Company's account came up to 20,364,600 dollars. Thus more than half of the total imports was presented by opium. The total exports on the private and the Company's account came up to 20,364,600 dollars in which the largest single item on both accounts was tea.* The quantity and the value of opium imported through Canton during 10 years from 1818-19, were estimated as follows.—

Year.		No. of Chests.	Value in dollars.
1811-19	...	4580	4,159,250
1819-20	...	4600	5,583,200
1820-21	...	4770	8,400,800
1821-22	...	4628	1,314,600
1822-23	...	5822	7,988,930
1823-24	...	7082	8,515,100
1824-25	...	8655	7,619,625
1825-26	...	9621	7,608,205
1826-27	...	9966	9,610,085
1827-28	...	9475	10,356,838

* See, Evidence of Mr. C. Major Banks before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 1830, on East India Affairs.

† Martin—Past and Present State of the tea-trade, etc., (1832).

* See, Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on East India Affairs, 1830, p. 97.

12. It is unnecessary to narrate in detail the deplorable history of the opium trade which grew as an annexe to the tea-trade for reasons which must be sufficiently obvious to our readers. The manufacture of this drug was one of the Indian industries from a very long time. It was converted into a Government monopoly in 1773 and the profits from this monopoly enabled Warren Hastings to finance his military operations in Bengal. In 1807 its cultivation, except on the Company's account, was prohibited and all opium was sold by auction on the express stipulation that it would be exported. The opium thus poured forth into China but the Chinese Government was not slow in realising the evil effects of this vicious drug. Its importations in China did, however, continue in spite of the legal ban. At first the trade was confined to Macao, then transferred to Whampoa, and then to the islands of the Canton river. It was carried on—not without interruptions—sometimes the boats being seized and the crew having their heads cut off. Nevertheless it continued but how long it could continue in this way was of course a different question. The Company, as previously mentioned, did not take part in this trade directly but had to see it “go on”. Their servants widely speculated in this drug and on more than one occasion they used their influence to avert a break. It was rightly believed that their influence and patronage alone averted the final crisis which, as subsequent history showed, rather closely followed the abolition, of their exclusive trade privileges at Canton, (1833).

13. It was apparent that such untenable conditions could not be expected to endure for an uncertain length of time. At the beginning of the nineteenth century tea was an international commodity with world-wide markets and its supply needed a stimulus that free and natural trade conditions duly could sustain. The monopoly of the East India Company was vigorously attacked and finally terminated in 1833. But the difficulties connected with the social and political system of the Chinese Empire were

things that did not admit of summary solutions. There were perhaps two courses:—one, the political control of China and exploitation on western lines just as we have it in our own day in the so-called mandatory territories; the other, to raise up rival sources of supply under European control and thus to get rid of the Chinese monopoly. The first solution was not easy to risk, if only in view of the wide-spread commercial interests involved on the Chinese shores. In any case it would have meant an international struggle for supremacy and prolonged wars. Further the Chinese themselves were not likely to submit to foreign domination and the Emperor, fully conscious of his huge man-power and the self-sufficiency of his vast Empire, was even arrogant and provoking. He was particularly jealous of the British who were building up a rival empire on his very frontiers. It was shrewdly suspected that the expansion of the British in Burma and Assam might even prompt him to shut up the Chinese shores against them altogether.

14 The second solution was more peaceful and all the more desirable, especially as the Chinese supply could by no means be unlimited. For the same physical causes which had hitherto confined the tea-plant to one or two countries set limit to its propagation even within those countries. It was therefore doubtful whether a greatly increased supply could be drawn from the original sources. A strong pressure for supplies was again sure to lead to a deterioration of the quality of produce. In fact such deterioration and adulteration was already in progress. Davies* mentions of various methods of passing spurious and adulterated teas, and though the Company maintained a staff of experts to check these abuses, these attempts became more persistent in the nineteenth century when the demand for tea was stronger than ever. The adulteration was carried on with such affrontery that an extensive manufactory of green teas was maintained at a village or suburb called Houan, exactly opposite to the European factories on the other side of the river,*.

*Davies—The Chinese—a general description of the Empire of China and its inhabitants.

of supply was therefore urgent and strong, but the difficulties were immense. First of all, the outside knowledge about China was meagre, and such informations as were available were mostly descriptions by travellers mostly the missionaries—with scant knowledge of botanical conditions. Even as late as 1840 the scholars were discussing whether the two main varieties of tea—the black and the green—were not the products of two distinct species of the tea-plant, and there were much conflicting informations with respect to the methods of their culture and manufacture. Secondly the Chinese were jealous of their secrets and were in no mood to give out their knowledge to their prospective competitors. Thirdly, the problem of naturalisation was by no means an easy one. Tea could not of course have a natural predilection for China and had indeed been discovered growing wild in Indo-China, Burma and other places. But a natural product was not the same thing as domesticated culture; and though the plant was found capable of acclimatisation under varying conditions of soil and climate, the more important question of making it preserve the stimulant and astringent properties of the leaves still remained to be solved.

On the last question, there were, however, certain encouraging factors. It was known that the tea-plants had long been successfully naturalised in Japan, and that several other plants such as Indigo and Coffee which were at one time believed to be strictly confined in their geographical limits had not merely been introduced in different places but in those places cultivated commercially with great success.

15. Attempts were made by more than one European nation to break up the Chinese monopoly by introducing tea culture in their own colonies. But these earlier efforts were far from successful. The Javanese Government had one advantage in having a large number of immigrants

from Fokien—a tea province of China—but their first experiments in 1826 yielded indifferent results. Attempts made to naturalise the tea-plant in Brazil, Prince of Wales Island, St. Helena and other places “were so far successful that the plants were not only reared, but thrived vigorously and seemed at first likely to fulfil the most sanguine expectations of the projectors. Their hopes were disappointed however, when the leaves were prepared for use. Some tolerable tea is said to have been made at St. Pauls in the Brazils and accounts differed as to the quality of the Javanese tea; but in general the produce of these experiments seem to have been of a very inferior description, possessing few or none of the characteristics of the Chinese leaves. In Prince of Wales Island it was even found to have acquired the appalling property of a nauseating and highly emetic drug”.

Failures prepare the way for success, and though the first efforts were far from successful, they were so much a success as to inspire hope for the future. It appears that these experiments were hasty, ill-considered and no sufficient care was taken with respect to the selection of proper sites, their aspect or elevation. The climate of Java and other places in the tropics was widely different from that of China, and though this, as we know to-day, is not in itself a limiting condition, the earlier planters had an inadequate grasp of the problems of naturalisation. Not only did they not possess the requisite knowledge of the proper cultural methods but they failed to realise the importance of the adaptation of those methods. A plant which flourishes in one land will by no means flourish equally well in a different country by the same cultural methods even if the soil properties be similar and climatic conditions not unfavourable. The Chinese methods and the importance of the Chinese stock were at first unduly emphasised and it was only through experience that these stern lessons were finally brought home.

GROWTH OF ASSAMESE LITERATURE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

(By SRIJUT BOLI NARAYAN DEKA, M.A., B.L.)

Sir George Abraham Grierson in his *Linguistic Survey of India* ; Vol. I, Part I, Introductory, remarked "The Assamese are justly proud of their national literature. In no department have they been more successful than in a branch of study in which India, as a rule, is deficient." It was so. Assam was certainly far more ahead than many of the provinces of India, in the richness of her literature and the greatness of her learning. From time immemorial, we find instances of Assam being the centre of learning to which students from different parts of India came for study. Mr E. B. Havell wrote that the colleges of Kamrup, like Nalanda, attracted students from all quarters. Hieun Tsang, in his travels, observed that the memories of the people of Kamrup were retentive and they were earnest in study. The king was fond of learning and the people were so in imitation of him. Men of ability came from afar to study here. Indeed, a knowledge of *Sanskrit*, according to the custom of the country, was an indispensable qualification to an Assamese gentleman.

The above notable remarks have been authenticated by the actual facts and deeds of some celebrated kings. One amongst them was the king Malladeva or Naranārāyana of Cooch-Bihar. He was a true man of letters. Himself a great patron of Assamese literature, he assembled the eminent scholars of his time and allotted different works to be rendered into metrical Assamese from Sanskrit scriptures to different Pandits. Suryyakhari Daivajua, in his *Darrang Rajavansavali*, gave the following account of the king Naranārāyana's earnest desire of and patronage for Assamese literature :—

গৌড় কামৰূপে যত পণ্ডিত আছিল।

সমস্তকে আনি সত্ৰ দেৱান পাতিলা ॥

বোলে বিপ্ৰ পণ্ডিত সমস্তে শুনিয়োক।
কণিৰ যুগত বুদ্ধি হৈব ভয় শোক ॥ ৬০৪
অন্ন আয়ু অন্ন বুদ্ধি হৈবেক নিশেষ।
লোপ হব পূৰ্ব্ব শাস্ত্ৰ গ্ৰন্থাদি বিশেষ ॥
শুনियो পুৰুষত্তম ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য দ্বিজ।
কৰিবোক বহুমালা ব্যাকৰণ বীজ ॥ ৬০৫
সম্প্ৰতিকে জীয়ে শূদ্রে পঢ়িব যতনে।
কিছু শেন ভৈলে পঢ়িবেক বিপ্ৰগনে ॥
শুনিবোক আজ্ঞা মোৰ বাম সৰস্বতি।
ভাৰতব পদ তুমি কৰিয়ো সম্প্ৰতি ॥ ৬০৬
আক আছে সপ্তকাণ্ড বামায়েণ যত।
শ্লোকক ভাজিয়া পদ কৰিয়ো সাম্প্ৰত ॥
অষ্টাদশ পুৰাণৰ কৰিয়োক পদ।
তাকে শুনি নবলোকে পাইব পৰম পদ ॥ ৬০৭
শুনियो শঙ্কৰ তুমি ভক্ত মহাজন।
বাচয় স্বৰ পদ কৰা নিবন্ধন ॥
হৰিৰ ভক্তিক তুমি কৰিয়ো প্ৰচাৰ।
হৰি ভজি নবে হোক স সাবৰ পাৰ ॥ ৬০৮
শুনियो শ্ৰীধৰ তুমি মোৰ বাক্য ধৰা।
জ্যোতিষক ভাজি তুমি সাধ্য খণ্ড কৰা ॥
বকুল কায়স্থ তুমি ভাজি লীলাৱতী।
অগ্নিতে বুজয় যেন কায়স্থে সম্প্ৰতি ॥ ৬০৯

—দৰং ৰাজবংশাবলী—

- The king assembled all those learned pandits who were in Gauda and Kamrup. He asked the Brahmin Purushottam Bhattacharyya to prepare a grammar named Ratnamala, ordered Ramasaraswati to render into Assamese verse the Mahabharata, the

Ramayana and the eighteen Puranas, asked Sankardeva to translate the Bhagavata into 'metrical Assamese, requested Sridhara to compile the Sadhyakanda, a treatise on Astronomy and asked Bakul Kayastha to translate the Lilavati, a book on mathematics—

These were the writers mentioned in the Darrang Rajavansavali to have flourished in the age of the king Naranarayana. But these did not complete in themselves the list of Assamese literary men of that memorable age. To these we may add the names of more than half a dozen writers of acknowledged status who, I believe, were not less erudite and less famous than these though their names did not appear in the royal court at Cooch Behar. Let us deal all of them one by one.

The latter part of the 15th and the whole of the 16th century had ushered in a new era in the literary and social history in Assam. The era had given birth to an unprecedented excitement of 'intellectual awakening'. In this century had flourished a band of distinguished writers who not only had made their names ever remembered in literature and various walks of life according to their aptitudes but also contributed materially to the very entity of the Assamese language which we now boast of as an independent language of our own and which, but for this group of painstaking hardworking and learned scholars could not thrive to this day by keeping its existence as an independent language in the midst of various adverse circumstances such as sordid attempts to undermine it from some corner and the indifference and lack of patronage from the other. In the pre-Vaisnavite period we find the names of a few writers, viz, Madhava Kandali, etc., who, so to speak, formed the nucleus of Assamese literature, but they were as Prof S. K. Bhuyan, M.A., B.L., in his Note on Assamese Manuscripts, has observed "The precursors of the Vaisnava revival as well as the actual promulgators of the message of the Bhagavata".

The first and foremost among these was the great reformer Sri Sankardeva.

He was the essence of the 16th century Assamese literature. If all else were lost he and his invaluable works alone would still be sole and sufficient evidence of Assamese literature. Mr. Nagendranath Basu, in his Social History of Kamrup, Vol. II, page 99, has said "Sankara had a wonderful poetic faculty and passed almost the whole life in writing books. His writings were very vigorous as he had added earnestness to his poetic ability. Hence his writings touched the heart of the people." Again in the same book at page 101, the author has aptly remarked "The religious songs introduced by him (Sankara) wrought a miracle in the country. Even the illiterate peasants came to feel their holy influence. It was gratifying to Sankara to learn that even the Chandalas and the cowboys of Assam sang songs of Sri Krishna". Sankardeva was not only poet but he was also a great dramatist. Late Pandit Hema Chandra Goswami, in his Descriptive Catalogue of Assam Manuscripts, observed "Sankaradeva may be regarded as the father of the Assamese dramatic literature". He wrote nine dramas. Moreover he was a thorough translator and when he rendered the Sanskrit Scriptures into metrical Assamese he faithfully translated them by preserving the spirit and strength of the original texts. "No one", says Mr. Nagendranath Basu, "could accurately translate the Sanskrit slokas like him". And this fact has been ably shown by Mr. Lakshminath Bezbarua in his Sankardeva, Chap. IV

“আৰু এটা কথা সদায় দেখা যায় যে শঙ্কৰ দেবে সংস্কৃত শ্লোকৰ যত পদলৈ ভাঙনি কৰিছে, সংস্কৃত শ্লোকটোৰ যদি দুই চৰণ বা চাৰি চৰণ থাকে, তেন্তে প্ৰায় তেওঁৰ পদবোৰে তেনেকুৱা দুফাকি বা চাৰিফাকি হৈ হয়, অথচ তাত তাৰ লালিত্য, কবিত্ব আৰু ভাবৰ অলপো ব্যাঘাত নহয়। যেনে,—“ন গঙ্গা, ন গগা সেতু ন কাশী ন চ পুষ্কৰ। জিহ্বাগ্ৰে বধতে যন্ত হৰিৰিত্যক্ষৰং হং” ইয়াৰ তেওঁ কৰা পদ—হৰি হেন ইটো অক্ষৰ জিহ্বা অগ্ৰে থাকে যাৰ। গঙ্গা, গগা কাশী পুষ্কৰ সেতুক যাইবাক নালাগে তাৰ” ॥ অথবা “যাহাৰ পুষ্কৰ থাকে হৰি হেন। ম। গঙ্গা গগা

কাশী পুঙ্খতো নাহি কাম” ॥ প্রতিভাশালী ওখ
শ্রেণীৰ পণ্ডিত কবিৰ বচনাৰ বিশেষত্বই এই।”

Again Sankardeva was a true describer of things. In his books his description were of such a nature that they seemed to dazzle the actual thing described in the eyes of a reader who, while reading, very well feels the vivacity of his writings and feels also that he is so carried away and absorbed in them that he forgets his own existence. Let us give here a few instances of his beautiful descriptions.—

“কীৰ সাগৰৰ মাঙে ত্ৰিকুট পৰ্বত ।
প্রকাশন্তে আছে তিনি লোকত বেকত ॥
সুবৰ্ণ বজত লোহা জলে তিনি শৃঙ্গ ।
চক্ষুত জমক গাঙ্গে দেখিতে বিবৰ্জ ॥ ৪৭৫
আন যত শৃঙ্গ বহে কৰে তিৰিমিৰ ।
দশোদিশ প্রকাশিয়া শোভে শুক্লগিৰি ॥
অযুত যোজন জুৰি জলে গিৰিবৰ ।
উদ্ভিত দেখিয় দশ ভাজাৰ প্ৰহৰ ॥ ৪৭৬
কীৰ সাগৰৰ চউ চৌভিত্তি উথলে ।
পথালে পৰ্বত সুশীতল দুৰ্জ জলে ॥
থানে থানে আছে ভূমি অনেক উছান ।
ফুলে জক মক গন্ধে নাহিকে সমান ॥ ৪৭৭
নদীনদ অশেষ বিশেষ সৰোবৰ ।
ফটিক নিম্বল জল দেখি মনোহৰ ॥
বিছাধৰী সবে তাত নামি কৰে স্নান ।
পথালি শৰীৰ বহে সুগন্ধিত আণ ॥ ৪৭৮

* * * *

শাল তাল তমাল মন্দাৰ পাৰিজাত ।
চম্পক আশোক আনো পুষ্প অসংখ্যত ॥
আম জাম নেমু জৰা জামীৰ খাজুৰী ।
বেল নাৰিকল তাল তাম্বুল পাকড়ি ॥ ৪৮০
অগক চন্দন পদ্ম সবল সোমাক ।
আনো যত তক সব যেন কল্পতক ॥
ছয় ঋতু এক স্থানে বসন্ত উদয় ।
ভ্রমবে গুঞ্জৰে কুলি পঞ্চম পূৰয় ॥ ৪৮১

—কীৰ্তন, গজেন্দ্ৰোপাখ্যান—

Again :—

পাছে ত্ৰিনয়ন, দিব্য উপবন,
দেখিলন্ত বিচ্ছমান ।
ফল ফুল ধৰি জক মক কৰি
আছে যত বৃক্ষমান ॥
শিৰাষ সেউতী, তমাল মালতী,
লবঙ্গ বাগী গুলাল ।
কৰবীৰ বক, কাঞ্চন চম্পক,
ফলভাবে ভাজে ডাল ॥ ৫৩৫
সেৱালী নেৱালী, পলাশ পাৰলী,
পাৰিজাত যুথী জাঁই ।
বকুল বন্দলী, আছে কুলি ফুলি,
তাৰ সীমা সংখ্যা নাই ॥
কনৌৰ কনাবী, কদম্ব বাবৰী,
নাগেশ্বৰ সিংহ চম্পা ।
আশোক অপাৰ, দেবনা মন্দাৰ,
মনোহৰ ৰাজ চম্পা ॥ ৫৩৬
কুন্দ কুকবক, কেতেকা টগৰ,
গন্ধে মোহে বহু দূৰ ।
গুটি মালী ভেটি, বঙ্গৌ বেরতী,
মকরা মধাই ধুতুৰ ॥
চন্দন অগক, দিব্য কল্পতক,
দেবদাক পদ্মবাসি ।
প্ৰাত গাছে গাছে, ভিহা বাহি আছে,
সুবৰ্ণ মানিকে খচি ॥ ৫৩৭
মণি মৰকত, স্থলী নানা মত,
দীপ্তি কৰে তাৰ কাছে ।
মহা মনোহৰ, দীঘি সৰোবৰ,
তাৰ মাজে মাজে আছে ॥
চাৰিও কাষৰে, প্ৰহাল বাখৰে,
বাহিলা বিচিত্ৰ কৰি ।
বৈদূৰ্য্য বাট, ফটিকৰ ঘাট,
মৰকতে খাট খৰি ॥ ৫৩৮
সুবৰ্ণ কমল, ভেট উতপল,
ফুলি ফুলি আছে ৰাজি ।
শোভে চক্ৰবাক, ৰাজহংস জাক,
স্থাল ভূষে উভজি ॥

কোটা কঙ্ক বক, বিবিধ চটক,
 ভ্রমন্ত নিৰ্ভয় ভাবে ।
 অমৃত সমান, জল কৰি পান,
 তাজে সুললিত বাৰে ॥ ৫৩৯
 চাৰিউ পাৰত, দিবা পুষ্প যত,
 গন্ধে দশোদিশ বাসে ।
 অনেক ভ্রমৰে, বেটিয়া গুপ্তৰে,
 মধুপান অভিলাষে ॥
 যত দিবা পক্ষী, ফল ফল ভক্ষি
 কাঢ়য় সুস্বৰ বাৰ ।
 কুলু কুলু ধ্বনি, কোকিলৰ শ্বনি
 বহা মলয়া বাৰ ॥ ৫৪০

—কীৰ্তন, হৰমোহন—

These two passages cannot but be the products of a born poet like Sankaradeva. It is not possible, we believe, that such a sweet and vivacious description can come out from the pen of an ordinary poet of the second class merit. It is as sweet as it is a collection of the choicest words. About the two passages Mr. Bezbarua remarks as follows:—

ওপৰত তুলি দিয়া লতে বৰ্ণনা দুডোখৰে পৃথিবীৰ সৰ্বশ্ৰেষ্ঠ কবিৰ গেখনীকো সন্মানিত কৰিব পাৰে। যি অসমীয়া ভাষাই এনে বৰ্ণনা হৃদয়ত ঠাই দিছে, সেই অসমীয়া ভাষা সম্পদত নিশ্চয় কুবেৰ। স্বভাব বৰ্ণনাৰ অমিয়া মধুৰী পান কৰোঁতা অসমীয়া কবি সকলো, শঙ্কৰ দেৱৰ ৰচিত এই কাব্য সৰোবৰত চিৰকাল “কোটা কঙ্ক বক বিবিধ চটকৰ” দৰে নিৰ্ভয়ে ভ্ৰম ভাৰ “অমৃত সমান জল পান কৰ” সুললিত কবিতাৰ বৰ তাজি নিজক নিশ্চয় ধন্য কৰিব। শঙ্কৰৰ অমৃত নিস্তান্দিনী লেখনীৰ পৰা ও লোৱা এই উপবনৰ জীবন্ত চিত্ৰৰ তুলনা নাই। যেনে উজু শব্দৰ সমাবেশ, তেনে ৰচনাৰ লালিত্য, তেনে ছন্দৰ লহৰী। এই বৰ্ণনা পঢ়িলে কোনোবা ভাৰতীয় ৰাফেলে (Raphael) অঁকা উপবনৰ চিত্ৰপট যেন লাগে। অসমীয়া ভাষাক শঙ্কৰদেৱে যে কি বত্নেৰে বিভূষিত কৰি থৈ গৈছে ভাবিলে শৰীৰ

ৰোমাঞ্চিত হয়। * * * *
 * * * * যি ভাষা এনে বত্নেৰে খচিত সি চিৰ উজ্জ্বল। কি উচ্চভাব, কি প্ৰাৰ্থনা, কি স্তুতি, কি কৰুণা, কি শোক সকলো বৰ্ণনাত শঙ্কৰদেৱে মুখা ফুটাই গৈছে।

Let us now see what a voluminous writer Sankaradeva was. He was the author of the following books:—

1 KIRTAN This is a book on religious prayer. It was one of the most important books composed for the purpose of propagating the message of the Bhagavata the essence of the Vaisnava creed of Assam. The speciality of the book lies in the fact that it was written in such sweet Assamese language as to be easily understood by the literate and illiterate as well as by men and women. The treatise, says Mr. Basu, on Bhakti cult were all written in Sanskrit and so they were scaled books to the masses. It was Sankaradeva who brought the religious works within the reach of the people by writing books in the dialect of the country and embodying in them the teachings of Vaisnavism. Kirtan was the abridged composition embodying the essence of several books, viz. Bhagavata, Gita, Padma Puran, Brahma Puran and so on. Mr. Bezbarua in his Sankaradeva, has remarked

ধৰ্ম্মপ্ৰচাৰ, ধৰ্ম্মশিক্ষা আৰু ধৰ্ম্মজীবন গঢ়িবৰ নিমিত্তে ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ কোনো ভাষাত কোনো প্ৰদেশত আমাৰ এই অসমীয়া কীৰ্তন পুথিখনৰ নিচিনা সৰ্বদা সুন্দৰ বৃত্তৰ পুথি যে নাই সেহটো আমি ডাঠকৈ কব পাৰোঁ। * * *
 ভাষাৰ লালগ্ৰ, ছন্দৰ ব্যৱস্থা, স্তবৰ লাবণ্য, ভাবৰ মাধুৰ্য্য, ভক্তিৰ দৃঢ়তা, চিন্তাৰ উচ্চতা আদি সমষ্টিৰে শঙ্কৰ দেৱৰ কীৰ্তন ৰচিত। * * *
 কীৰ্তনৰ ৰচনা প্ৰণালী কেনে শুৱলা, কেনে কবিতাপূৰ্ণ গাৰু সি কেনে (Mastermind) প্ৰতিভাশালী লোকৰ ৰচনা, তাক যি পঢ়িছে সিথৈই সেই কথা ভালকৈ অনুভৱ কৰিছে ॥”

To be continued in next issue

REVIEWS.

BOOKS.

Kamarupa Sāsanaśāli.—This book contains the text and translation, in Bengali, of all the inscriptions of old Kāmarupa as well as an excellent introduction with copious notes. It is a pity that Pandit Padmīnāth Bhattacharya Vidyāvinod did not prefer to write this book in English for, if he had done so, it would have been an important book of reference to all orientlists throughout India and abroad. Pandit Vidyāvinod's researches into the ancient history of Kāmarupa are well-known and his theories are not to be lightly brushed aside. We however think that he has arrived at certain incorrect conclusions. His theory that after conquest of Gauda and Karnasuvarna, through the joint efforts of Śrī Harsha and Bhāskaravarman, the former annexed both these territories to his empire and that when the two allied kings were celebrating their victory at Karnasuvarna the Nidhanpur inscription was recorded is evidently incorrect. It appears from the Harsha Charita that Śrī Harsha did not personally conduct the operations against Śasānka. He deputed, for this purpose, his general Bhaṇḍi who with Bhāskaravarman attacked and defeated Śasānka who was compelled to retreat to the south. Gauda and Karnasuvarna were then included within the dominions of Bhāskaravarman, otherwise the Kāmarupa king could not have confirmed the grant of lands which were situated on the banks of the old channel of the Kausika (Kosi), i. e. within Puṇḍravardhana. The expulsion of Śasānka from Karnasuvarna took place about 610 A. D. before the formal coronation of Śrī Harsha in 612 A. D. Some twenty years after Śrī Harsha, on his way back from the Ganjam campaign, halted at Rajmahal and there Bhāskaravarman and Yuan Chwang met him. Śrī Harsha encamped on the boundary of Bhāskaravarman's extended kingdom which included

Gauda and Karnasuvarna. He did not con- to Karnasuvarna and thence summon Bhāskaravarman which he would have naturally done if Karnasuvarna had been included in his empire. As a matter of fact there is hardly any doubt that Gauda and Karnasuvarna continued to be included within the Kāmarupa kingdom for nearly a century after the death of Bhāskaravarman and about the second quarter of the eighth century the Kāmarupa king Śrī Harsha Varma Deva extended his conquests as far south as Orissa and as far west as Kośala. This is clearly stated in the Nepal inscription of Jayadeva dated 748 A. D., according to Sylvain Lévy. It was evidently Śrī Harsha Varma Deva, the king of Kāmarupa and Gauda, who was overthrown by Yaśovarman and it was this defeat which was glorified in the *Gauda calā*.

Another theory of Pandit Vidyāvinod which will be contended is that Kāmapāla the Pāla king of Bengal conquered only the western part of Kāmarupa over which he installed a feudatory chief named Tingyadeva as ruler. When during the reign of Kāmapāla Tingyadeva revolted the Pāla king sent his minister Vaidyadeva to suppress the rebel ruler. Vaidyadeva succeeded in uprooting Tingyadeva who was killed in battle. Thereafter Vaidyadeva became the ruler. Now according to Vidyāvinod Vaidyadeva and Dharmapāla ruled about the same time in the western and the eastern parts of Kāmarupa respectively. There are however good reasons to suppose that Kāmapāla conquered the whole of Kāmarupa, perhaps defeating Jayapāla the son of Dharmapāla, and that Vaidyadeva, as king of Kāmarupa, had his capital somewhere within the present district of Kamrup. Kāmarupanagar—"City of Kamrud" as mentioned by Minhaj in his *Tabaquat-i-Nasiri*—was no doubt the capital but it -

very probably within modern Kamrup and not on the banks of the Karatoyā as supposed by Vidyāvinod.

The name of Pandit Vidyāvinod—one of the founders of our Society and the discoverer of our oldest copper-plate inscription—will always be remembered throughout

Kāmarupa. He has placed us under a deep debt of gratitude by publishing, at his own expense, the book under review wherein he has given the most correct readings of the text of all the inscriptions so far discovered and edited the same with masterly ability and erudition

PERIODICALS.

"*The Cottonian*."—The March number of this magazine of the Cotton College at Gauhati contains an article on the "Introduction of Hindu Astronomy into Europe—The part played by Assam" from the pen of Prof. S. K. Bhuyan, M.A. B.L., which ought to have found a place, more suitably, in a research journal. Mr. Bhuyan refers to the fact that in 1691 A. D. Giovanni Domenico Cassini published in Europe an account of certain astronomical rules which were taken from Assam by one M. De La Loubiere. It is not known who M. De La Loubiere was and when he visited Assam. Mr. Bhuyan points out that Mir Jumla invaded Assam in 1662 A. D. and that he was accompanied by a number of Europeans, who acted as sailors and naval officers. It is probable that M. De La Loubiere was one of them.

That Kāmarupa was a seat of learning in astronomy in ancient times is indicated by its older name Prāgyjyotiṣa. The temple of Navagraha (nine planets) in Gauhati and Sri Surya near Goalpara town confirm this supposition. The Sanskrit and Assamese published manuscripts collected by the Government include a number of works on astronomy such as *Ayanuṅga*, a Sanskrit work dealing with the precession of the equinox and regarded as a valuable astronomical treatise, *Graha Vija Jñāna*, another Sanskrit work dealing with the movements of planets and their conjunction *Grahana Teyā*, a Sanskrit work on eclipses based on Bhāswati, a renowned work on astronomy by Jyotiṣa, another Sanskrit work on the calculation of the almanac. It is known from the latter part of the sixteenth century, of about a century prior to the visit of M. De La Loubiere, Śrīdhara, one of the

gems of the court of the famous Koch king Narnārāyan, compiled an astronomical work based on the *Sudhya Khanda* of Bhāswati. The high social position of the *Gnaks* or *graha bipras* (priests for planetary worship) in Assam unlike other provinces, indicates that both astronomy and astrology were held in high esteem in Kāmarupa. It is stated by Mr. Bhuyan no attempt has yet been made to investigate into the special features of the Kāmarupa school of Hindu astronomy. We hope a competent scholar will start research in this direction without delay. The manuscripts on the subject already collected may be studied and an attempt should be made to collect other papers on astronomy and astrology before they are lost.

Vangusri—The *Chaitra* number of this Bengali magazine contains an article from the pen of Mr. N. K. Bhattacharya, M.A., the well-known Bengali scholar, on Muhammad Ibn Bukhtiyar's ill-fated expedition towards Tibet. As far back as the year 1851 Col. Hannay contributed a paper to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal entitled "Brief Notice of the Sil-sako Stone Bridge in Zillah Kamrup". In this paper he held that it was this bridge over which Bukhtiyar and his Tartar cavalry passed in the year 1205-06 A. D. in his expedition towards Tibet. Subsequently Raverty, who translated the *Tuhfat-i-Nasiri*, controverted Col. Hannay's theory in detail and opined that the bridge was over the river Karatoyā. Blochman, who followed both Hannay and Raverty, held that the bridge was over the Tista somewhere near Dariceling. Both Raverty and Blochman ridiculed the theory that Bukhtiyar passed through any part of modern

Assam. Gait, at page 86 of his History of Assam, accepts the theory of Raverty and holds that soon after crossing this bridge over the Karatoyā Bukhtiyar entered the hills. He thus implies that Bukhtiyar traversed through only the Jalpaiguri district then included within Kāmarupa. He paid no attention to the tradition in Assam that Bukhtiyar actually came into the present district of Kamrup—a tradition recorded in the *Kāmarupa Baranji* published by the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in Assam. Of course the rock-inscription in North Gauhati relating to the destruction of Bukhtiyar's army in Kāmarupa was not discovered when Gait published the first edition of his book. The existence of this inscription, on an immense rock in North Gauhati, naturally raises the presumption that the Turkish army Bukhtiyar was destroyed not very far from the place where the memorable occurrence was recorded. Mr. Bhattasali has well, by putting forward cogent argument, proved that Col. Hannay's theory was correct. Minhaj the author of the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* gathered the story of the destruction from a follower of Bukhtiyar long after the disaster. The geographical inaccuracies in his account are therefore not at all unexpected. According to his account a Muslim general came upon a big river, three times the size of the Ganges, and this river was called Begmati, Bangmati or Bhamati. The people called it the Samudra. Such a big river cannot be the Karatoyā or the Titā. Mr. Bhattasali assumes that Bukhtiyar marching from Mongal towards Assam reached Rangamati and there came upon the big river Brahmaputra. In the account of Minhaj the name of the place has been applied to the name of the river by mistake. Here is the clue. Marching along the north bank of the Brahmaputra and probably passing near Hajo, by the old road, Bukhtiyar crossed the Sil-sāko over the *Puspahadra* which was then the running channel of the Barnadi. Then he followed the course of the Barnadi towards the hills. During his march through

the hills the king of Kāmarupa broke two piers of the bridge and rendered it impassable with a view to catch the retreating Muslim army in a trap. The Raja anticipated that Bukhtiyar's attempt to cross the mountains would be unsuccessful and he, as a matter of fact, had warned Bukhtiyar as soon as the latter entered his kingdom. As Bukhtiyar's army had approached his capital disregarding his advice and as the Muslim soldiers had plundered villages for supplies the Raja came to the conclusion that military considerations dictated that an armed foreign host so near the capital must be destroyed by any means fair or foul. The retreating Turkish army of Bukhtiyar was actually caught in a trap and completely destroyed, as stated by Minhaj and also in the inscription (*Tabaqat-i-Khyas-nama*). The date of the occurrence, 1141 C. 1127 Saka as given in the inscription agrees with the date given in the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*. Mr. Bhattasali has shown that the date corresponds to the Muslim calendar.

Raverty, Blochman and others have unsatisfactorily assumed that the river was three times the size of the Ganges and could be spanned by a stone bridge. They have all overlooked the fact that in the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, that the expedition of Bukhtiyar was led by Malik Yuzb. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq, a very successful general, transported his army across the river Begmati or Bhamati. It is now clear that Malik Yuzb. on reaching Rangamati transported his army across the Brahmaputra there and then marched towards Gauhati along the south bank of the river. On the other hand, his predecessor Bukhtiyar continued his march from Rangamati along the north bank of the river in order to follow the course of the Barnadi into Bhamati. The *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, a work of the thirteenth century, is a very valuable historical account of the events of that century. Only it has to be correctly interpreted as done in this instance by Mr. Bhattasali.